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A Quarterly Journal of Fact and Opinion

Columbia University

FORUM

In Defense of the City *James Marston Fitch*

American Opera: Curtains & Overtures *Jack Beeson*

Democracy and Babel *Irving Kristol*

Being with Berenson *Herbert L. Jacobson*

European Journal *Paul Goodman*

Columbia University

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A Quarterly Journal of Fact and Opinion

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LETTERS

Mr. Day on population

● What Lincoln Day said ["The American Fertility Cult; Our Irresponsible Birth Rate"; Summer 1960] cannot be said too often. Within his space he said a great deal. I hope a great many people are influenced by his presentation.

CHARLES A. GULICK
1924 Ph.D., Graduate Faculties
University of California
Berkeley, California

● . . . Lincoln Day's essay is a sound and forceful statement which I hope will get a wide circulation. It is high time that the nation begin to realize the long-range consequences of our existing rate of population growth.

FRANK W. NOTESTEIN
The Population Council, Inc.
New York, New York

Please turn to page 49.—EDITOR

Small switch

● In his remarks on social science ["Two Attitudes to Sociology"; Summer 1960], the English Garry Runciman was short-circuited by a pair of American 'Electrics.' He referred to the studies carried out by General Electric but undoubtedly had in mind the work done by the Western Electric Co. at their Hawthorne Works in Chicago from 1927 to 1932.

C. PAUL MARTIN
Assistant Purchasing Agent
Columbia University

The nurture of variety

● Eugene Raskin is right ["On the Nature of Variety"; Summer 1960] when he says that monotony is a form of death, and most particularly so for cities. My only disagreement with his article, and it is minor, is the implication in his last sentence that study of complex urban variety is needed to preserve our inheritance of variety. I think

it is as urgently needed to evolve further urban variety. In short, I do not think city variety arises by accident (although its details may be happenstance); the principles that foster it on the one hand and discourage it on the other should be the chief concern of city planning. [But] simply stating that variety is a matter of content, rather than of superficial form, is a useful, in fact a very valuable, step toward better understanding of cities . . .

JANE JACOBS
Architectural Forum
New York, New York

Anent the Wisdom Society

● The wind that blows from Wilshire Boulevard is hot indeed, and Robert Clements' witty stiletto job ["The Wisdom Society & I," Summer 1960] gives that inflated organization no more than it deserves. He writes in the main tradition of satirical demolition . . . The pretenders to learning, invariably trimmers in transparent disguise, never know [the real thing] until they are hit by the truly wise, whose weapons are forged, not fabricated. Socrates did it to the Sophists . . . But every generation has to do it over again. If I were rich, it would almost be worth-while to invest \$15 to see whether the WISDOM SOCIETY's reading lists—which I assume its officers must provide as a minimum first step toward easy and accessible self-education—include the names, among others, of Aristophanes, Chaucer, Rabelais, Montaigne, Ben Jonson, Molière, Swift, and Shaw. At any rate, Mr. Clements has my gratitude for publicly and deftly letting the gas out of the bag.

ROBERT HOOPES
Dean of the Faculty
Michigan State University, Oakland
Rochester, Michigan

Mr. Hoopes is a former vice president of the American Council of Learned Societies. —EDITOR

An aspect of relativity

● Alexander Dorozynski's essay "Clearing It Up About Relativity" in the Summer 1960 issue gave an

excellent and, I believe, accurate account of the present conflict between a number of physicists, apart from Gamow and myself, regarding the time paradox. Clarification demands my pointing out that there are two different causes for time dilatation: one due to constant relative velocity, as predicted by the time-dilatation formula of Einstein's Special Theory; the other due to acceleration. Both of these cannot be manifested simultaneously in any particular situation. The former is the subject of disagreement with some physicists, including myself, who maintain that the effect exists during relative motion between two objects but that there is no permanent time difference between the two upon termination of the relative motion. Others, including Gamow and Bondi, believe the time dilatation is permanent with a "frozen-in" time lag between the two objects upon cessation of the relative velocity. Most physicists (including myself) do agree that time dilatation due to acceleration or gravitation alone is permanent, however.

The difficulty in applying the time-dilatation formulas arises because any actual test has to incorporate a combination of accelerations and velocities or, at best, accelerations only. It is claimed by some that an atomic clock in a satellite will test the effect predicted by the Special Theory; but this cannot be done since the complicating effect of accelerations must enter. The proposal to test the effect due to gravitation or acceleration alone, however, should be 100 per cent successful and few physicists are disputing the predicted results.

The importance of all this in space travel is that many people, including some eminent scientists, are claiming that space travel will be the "fountain of youth." This is based on the belief in a permanent time lag from velocity effects alone, with which I disagree. Based on acceleration alone, the time saving is extremely small and would amount to but several seconds for a total trip lasting 100 years, during which seconds the highest now-tolerable accelerations are experienced.

JAMES A. COLEMAN
American International College
Springfield, Mass.



Bill Klein from his book *New York*

IN DEFENSE OF THE CITY

by **JAMES MARSTON FITCH**

In recent years a whole literature has appeared on "the disappearing city." Following that special brand of Social Darwinism which is endemic to so much current thought, it argues that the metropolis is "doomed," "obsolete," its disappearance from the stage of history and from beneath our feet ineluctable. According to this interpretation of the "law" of survival of the fittest, the city is destined simply to dissolve, distributing its amenities in a thin, even film of suburban houses, shopping centers and country day schools across the landscape.

It is perfectly true that the mechanization of American life in all its major aspects has almost equalized the historic disparity between the material conditions of urban and rural life. A whole range of amenities hitherto the monopoly of the city has in the past fifty years been extended into the countryside—amenities of which the public school, the paved road, the ambulance and the powerline are merely symbols. Mechanization has also made possible the decentralization of manufacturing, thereby introducing new modes of work and thought into the rural hinterland. And these same events have of course affected the function and the form of the metropolis. Mechanization makes possible the unprecedentedly fluid movement of people and goods, and this has meant that many of the commercial and industrial activities historically concentrated in the central city could be moved out of it. With those activities could go the population connected with them.

These shifting populations and processes have, especially in recent decades, left ugly vacuums and imposed dreadful strains upon the physical and social fabric of the central city—and the

A moving depiction of the "vessel and generator of civilization," and a credo for restoring it from the inhumane landscape it has become.

resulting confusion and squalor have driven further sectors of the population out to the suburbs, even though their economic and cultural focus remained in the central city. The result of all this has been the blurring of the physical and cultural distinctions between the city and the countryside and the birth of a whole set of misconceptions, as well-intentioned as they are misinformed, about the city. Not only is the countryside now described as a more pleasant place in which to live (the urban elite, Virgil no less than Vanderbilt, has often felt this way during epochs of social peace), but now, for the first time in Western history, it is seriously being argued that the city itself is no longer viable.

This is a grotesque misreading of the city's historic function. As the etymology of the word suggests, the city has always been not merely the vessel but the actual generator of civilization. It is not at all accidental that such words and concepts as Civil, Civilized, Citizen, Urbane, Urbanity, cluster around the word and concept City. For urban experience is their point of origin. They represent mankind's distilled experience with the city as a special instrument of social organization. It has always been the lodestar of farmer, herdsman, hunter, sailor. It offered them steady employment, and the food, clothing and shelter that were statistically so chancy elsewhere. It offered them paved streets, lighted taverns, buzzing markets, instead of barnyard mud or storm-tossed ocean nights. It promised them music, dancing, theater, and spectacle. Even more precious, it gave them relative safety from war and sanctuary and asylum for dissent. But beneath all of these was the city's most splendid gift: a *range of choice*, an entire spectrum of possible lines of action. This was the lodestar that pulled them, the chance of escape from the routine idiocy of life on the farm, the steppe, the sea.

The attractive power of the city is somewhat obscured in contemporary America by the surface glitter of universal mechanization. But one

need only visit such under-industrialized countries as Egypt or Greece to see the attraction still vividly at work. The peasantry flees the stupefying poverty and monotony of a countryside ravished by centuries of ignorance and neglect. And its instinct is correct, however inadequately or unevenly Cairo or Athens may live up to its promises. For the amelioration of the material conditions of life can be accomplished only by the science and technology of the city; even the regeneration of agriculture and the countryside is, culturally, an urban task.

Of course, the advantages which the city offered the citizen were a kind of cultural superstructure erected upon its basic economic function. As an instrument of production, it was unique—the only conceivable habitat of merchant and banker, craftsman and artist, because it afforded them three conditions, critically important and available nowhere else: proximity, predictability, option. The city constituted a common reservoir of raw materials and finished goods, of manual and intellectual skills, upon which everyone engaged in production could draw. This was a reservoir of absolutely incalculable value, one which no individual could conceivably afford to maintain alone. And its concentration, in both time and space, meant that any producer had immediate *proximity* to all the goods and services upon which he depended as well as to those who, in turn, depended upon him. Because there was always duplication of every type of goods and skill, there was always *predictability* of supply. And, finally, because of both of the above conditions, the city offered that last essential of the market, *option*, a range of choice within a given type or category.

Out of such quantitative relationships grew the qualitative phenomena of civilization. And if such a process was true of the city of antiquity, how much more characteristic it is of the infinitely more complex fabric of modern industrial society. Today, when we speak of financial centers, garment centers, publishing centers in a great metropolis like New York; or

when we refer to Detroit as the center of one industry or Hollywood of another, we are dealing not in metaphor but in the most concrete of social realities. Such a center represents a unique concentration of cultural forces. Personal, face-to-face contact; daily exposure to the friction of competitive ideas; continual exchange of information and opinion within related fields—these are the essential properties of the center. And this, precisely, is why the center cannot be decentralized. Modern technology may permit the dispersal of this or that phase of production. Modern tele-communications may make it possible for a single national center to control a national industry. But the creativity of the urban center will no more survive subdivision and dispersion across the countryside than would the human brain survive a similar distribution across the nervous system.

These are some of the fundamentals ignored by the literature of the "disappearing city." There are other considerations for those who think that paved roads and electric refrigerators are equivalent to urban culture. A law of urban development, analogous to those which operate in the physical sciences, dictates that human communities must pass beyond some quantitative minimum in order to effect that qualitative change which we call social invention. This qualitative difference is not directly (or at least not mechanically) proportional to simple physical magnitude. The Athens of Pericles was never larger than Yonkers. Renaissance Florence was smaller than New Haven. Chicago, on the other hand, is three times the size of Imperial Rome and has not a fiftieth of her power and substance. It seems logical to suppose that, for a given level of technological development, there must be an optimal size for the metropolis. But on the basis of present knowledge, it does not seem possible to say what that optimum size should be. It may well be that the great metropolises of the world are too large to function effectively. It may well be that the future will see a planned reduction in their size. But this is a far different thing from declaring them "obsolete" and rejoicing in their dissolution.

Yet that is what large and influential sectors of American opinion are doing today. They

describe the desiccation of the central city (and the parallel urban sprawl which pollutes more of the landscape every day) as inevitable. Some of them go much further, hailing the process as good:

We have been able to disperse our factories, our stores, our people; in short, to create a revolution in our living habits. Our cities have spread into suburbs . . . The automobile has restored [sic!] a way of life in which the individual may live in a friendly neighborhood, it has brought city and country closer together, it has made us one country and a united people. (Report of the Clay Committee on national highways, appointed by President Eisenhower in 1954.)

Insofar as the future of the city is the subject of any responsible thought, that thought seems dominated by a kind of mad *laissez-faire*-ism. Subjected to a whole set of anarchic and destructive forces, the city is expected to prove itself, medieval-style, in a trial by fire and water. If it survives, this theory seems to say, well and good; if it succumbs, good riddance. This preposterous policy of non-intervention permits the subsidy of all sorts of forces hostile to the city's well-being, yet forbids any defensive response.

This is especially clear in the field of transportation, where the dominant attitude is one of macabre non-sequitur. Responsible men see nothing improper in the expenditure of tens of billions of dollars to build new highways to bring automobiles into the cities. Yet they are outraged at the obvious corollary—that there should be free, tax-supported parking garages to receive the cars that are thus dumped into the city. Respectable opinion finds it unobjectionable to subsidize the movement of people and goods by motor, plane and barge—none of which could move a mile without stupendous public expenditures on highways, airports and rivers. Yet this same opinion boggles at the idea of subsidy to the railroads, grows apoplectic at the mention of nationalization (though the USA is the only nation on earth which still clings to the polite fiction that privately-owned railroads are consonant with national welfare). The central city is being throttled by such paradoxes. Its streets are drowning in a rising tide of vehicular traffic at the same time that public mass transportation systems are declining. Rail passenger service between cities, and especially

commuter service into the city, is collapsing without a finger's being raised to prevent it. The large investment represented in interurban and trolley systems has been junked piece-meal, with no effort at rehabilitation. Side by side with this private bankruptcy, billions in public funds have been pumped into insatiable highway schemes which—whatever they may have accomplished in the countryside—have only led to steadily worsening traffic conditions in the central city.

Transportation is only one aspect of the urban problem but, like the circulatory function in the animal body, it is a critically important one. And our current irrational manipulation of it reveals our lack of understanding, at both national and local levels, of the cultural function of the central city and of the minimal conditions for its survival. The physical expression of this function (proximity, predictability, option) is the street. The street, and not the buildings on it, is the secret of the city. Unless the street is healthy, the city dies.

Part of the American mismanagement of the city is due to our persistent inability to see the difference between the street and the road. Our long exploitative experience with land as a commodity leads us to act as if every country lane was destined ultimately to become a profitable city street. Many have, of course; and this very process has served to conceal the essential difference between the two. For a road, properly speaking, is for moving people and goods from where they are to where they want to get to; while a street, properly speaking, is for people who are already where they want to be. Thus the road can be almost indefinitely widened or extended. Since transport is its only function, it can be designed to accept any type of vehicle, in any quantity, moving at any rate of speed. But a city street, to be successful, must meet the incomparably more subtle assignment of facilitating commerce in ideas and goods. It is therefore primarily a pedestrian facility and must be designed to the walker's scale in time and space.

Of course, the foot has always had to share the street with the wheel, and competition between the two is not new. Already in Cicero's Rome, wheeled traffic was so heavy on the main

thoroughfares that it was restricted by law to late night hours (much to the annoyance of the tenants of the apartment houses on either side). This conflict has steadily sharpened, especially since the Industrial Revolution. Only Venice, with her unique separation of water-borne transport from all pedestrian traffic, has escaped: and it is to Venice that one must go today to comprehend how wonderful a space is a street without any wheels!

But what was merely conflict before the automobile appeared has become a mortal dichotomy since. Its impact upon the central city has been disastrous throughout the world but its most destructive effects have been most acutely felt in America. Not only have we made the widest use of the auto as a means of personal transport; but also we have greatly extended, if not indeed largely built, most of our cities since the introduction of the auto fifty years ago. Some of the newer metropolitan areas (Houston, Los Angeles) have been structured upon the private auto as the only form of transportation.

No other form of wheeled traffic has ever approached the auto in destructiveness. (No reference is here intended to its destruction of human life, though that is murderous enough; it is the nation's seventh most important cause of death and fourth highest cause of disability; and it is now coming under suspicion as contributing to the alarming rise of lung cancer.) For the auto has not merely taken over the street. It is dissolving all the connective tissue of the city. Its appetite for space is absolutely insatiable: moving and parked, it devours urban land. In Los Angeles, where the process is perhaps most advanced, the spectacle is frightening; the economist George H. Hildebrand, a longtime student of that city, says:

Two-thirds of the land area of Los Angeles is now devoted to streets, freeways and parking lots. A recent semi-official projection of future public investment, amounting to several billions for the next decade, commits over half to the motor car. Not one cent is set aside for public transportation. Between 1949 and 1951 an invaluable nucleus for a rapid transit rail system was deliberately abandoned in favor of exclusive dependence upon freeways and the private automobile.

It would be dismaying enough if these freeways, which cost from \$3 to \$15 millions per mile, solved the problem. Unfortunately, says

Professor Hildebrand, they do not:

Already they are so clogged with traffic at peak hours that one can say of them: as a means of transportation they are always available except when you need them. The center of the city is dying. There are no proper facilities for opera, symphony, or theater . . . All civic energies are devoted to the sole purpose of 'relieving' automobile congestion—by encouraging it further. Each day the atmosphere is poisoned by smog, two-thirds of which is attributable to automobiles. What has emerged is an endless waste of suburbs, yielding an impression of chaos and ugliness . . . if this is the image of the American future, it is not a pleasant one.

Much the same picture may be seen (and with especial clarity from the air) in any American city. The public groundspace has been rendered largely uninhabitable. Esthetically it has been destroyed, lost beneath a tide of moving, stalled and parked automobiles. Gas-filled, noisy and hazardous, our streets have become the most inhumane landscapes in the world.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the social and cultural effectiveness of the central city has dropped alarmingly. To restore it, the street must be redeemed. And this, as Louis Kahn, the famous Philadelphia architect and city planner, has pointed out, can only be done by unscrambling the traffic.

Today's city streets carry half a dozen different, contradictory types of traffic—pedestrians who want to stroll along; busses that want to go-stop-go; private cars that want to go at an even rate without stopping and then find a place to park; other cars that want to pass the city altogether (but cannot); trucks, trolley cars, delivery boys on bikes, each with a different mission, each with a different rate of movement.

To try to funnel all these kinds of traffic through the same street at the same time is as absurd to Kahn as trying to funnel gas, hot water, cold water, sewage and electric current through a single tube. This makes it impossible for the street to function effectively as a traffic artery. But it has an even more disastrous effect upon the buildings along either side, for no building can "work" satisfactorily at two different time-scales—one for pedestrians lazing along at 2 mph, the other for automobiles at 50 mph.

With its heavy wheeled traffic, narrow crowded sidewalks, solid walls and open ends, the typical American street acts like a simple conduit. A strong, linear current is set up which is hostile, both physically and psycho-

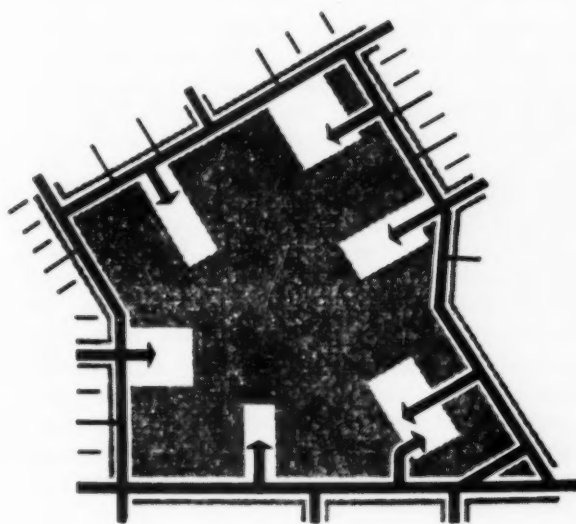
logically, to the full development of urban life. It creates a rip-tide along the face of buildings where—to finish with hydraulic similes—there should be quiet water, coves and bays. The very nature of social intercourse requires the *cul-de-sac*, the enclave, the shaded portico and sunny court—the zone between the full openness of the street and the full enclosure of the building.

The first step in reconstructing the street would obviously be to restore a healthy circulation between the city and the surrounding hinterland from which it draws its nourishment. And it should be apparent to any rational observer that this can only be accomplished by mass rapid transit: whatever the proper uses of the private automobile (and they are many and real) urban transport is clearly not one of them. It does not much matter what form this mass transit takes—subways, surface trains, aerial trams—technology makes the solution of this problem simple. Nor, in terms of the stakes involved, does it much matter what the necessary subsidies will amount to. The cost of the present urban chaos is quite literally incalculable.

When this fundamental task is accomplished, the reconstruction of the central city becomes possible. What precise lines this reconstruction should follow is still a matter of discussion among planners and architects. But there is general agreement that all surface transportation—public and private alike—would terminate at a ring of stations and storage garages (Kahn calls them "harbors") around the periphery of the central district. Subways, local busses and taxis would handle local passenger traffic within the center, moving in channels strictly segregated from pedestrians. Trucks would have their own separate times and lanes of movement. This is the schematic substance of the famous Fort Worth plan of architect Victor Gruen. Although it now seems unlikely that the Texas city will ever enjoy the benefits of this plan, it has already become a classic. It visualized the conversion of the central city streets into landscaped pedestrian malls, with the existing grid-iron pattern of intersecting conduits converted into a series of snug pedestrian-scaled *cul-de-sacs*. This pedestrian world was to be connected by a dense network of shuttle



The classic—but unbuilt—Gruen plan for turning downtown Fort Worth, Texas, into a habitat for people. Transportation into this central business area would terminate at six huge garages (arrows at right). Streets then become landscaped pedestrian malls, and no building in the mile-square area would be more than a three-minute walk from a parking area, taxi, or bus. Existing buildings remain undisturbed. (Drawings courtesy of Victor Gruen Associates.)



busses to a ring of bus terminals and parking facilities around the periphery. By its planned concentration of office buildings, stores, theaters and public buildings of all sorts in the center, the Gruen plan sought to re-establish the walker's space as the nexus of the social, cultural, and commercial activities of the city.

The Gruen plan is perhaps the most mature American response to date to the crisis of the central city. It does not, of course, stand alone. As a result of Congressional legislation and appropriations for so-called urban renewal and redevelopment, we begin to have the means for this type of intervention in the urban crisis on a national scale. The means, but not yet the policy: for enough of these redevelopment projects are taking shape to make it clear that, though we are becoming aware of the need to act, we have a very unclear image of what should be done. Aside from the ineffable scent of profiteering and graft that surrounds some of the projects, most of them seem to be structured upon make-shift or improvised plans. Too often they appear as mere by-products of complex traffic arteries whose validity is open to question. Too many of them assume the form of luxury apartment towers standing in the midst of expensively landscaped deserts. And very few show any real grasp of the essential qualities of urban space.

Since few American architects and planners have ever had the opportunity to design projects of such dimensions before, a certain amount of initial fumbling was perhaps to be expected. But by now we should understand that one source of the exhilaration we experience in the great urban spaces of the world comes from the variety they always afford the senses. This variety is the expression of multiplicity and diversity of building type and tenancy. Thus, though neither could be called beautiful, both London's Trafalgar and New York's Times Square are almost always rewarding experiences to the pedestrian, at almost any time of day or night. On the other hand, a large single-use project like New York's Lincoln Center is not apt to yield the maximum of metropolitan excitement because its specialized use will lead to part-time, monochromatic activity. Traffic jams at certain time will alternate with wasteland emptiness at others.

A second precious quality in successful urban space is its pedestrian scale. Most architecture is experienced (seen, heard, felt, smelled) along a plane five feet above the ground. That—and not an aerial vantage point—is the point of view from which urban spaces should be conceived. This does not mean that they need to be small—there is nothing domestic in the scale of Piazza San Marco in Venice or the Tuilleries in Paris—but rather that they should afford the pedestrian that sense of comprehensible organization, that delicious feeling of embrace and enclosure, which all the great urban spaces of the world provide.

A coherent policy toward the city, based upon a clear understanding of its cultural function, will also enable us better to regulate its relations with suburbs and hinterland. And one of the first objectives of such a policy would be to restore and preserve the special social and physical characteristics of each. It will not be enough to rehabilitate the center: the mindless squalor which today surrounds and isolates it must also be cleaned up. The endless semi-slums of Queens or South Chicago; the miles-long decay of Euclid Avenue in Cleveland; the obscene spoilation of the Jersey Meadows—all of these are symptoms or the same disease of urban sprawl which must be halted and then reversed.

If we are to preserve and extend the values we most cherish in our culture, then we must act to save their generator. The task will not be easy, cannot be quick, and certainly will not be "automatic." We must relinquish that childish American faith in *laissez-faire* which acts as though so delicate a mechanism as a city will repair itself, like those reptiles which are supposed to grow new tails to replace the dismembered ones. The task demands considered policy, planned and resolute action. The sheer magnitude of the issues involved permits nothing less.



James Marston Fitch is a professor of architecture at Columbia and writes frequently on architectural subjects. His new book, *The Esthetics of Plenty*, will be published by Columbia University Press after the first of the year. Its title essay and an essay on Horatio Greenough appeared first in this magazine.

HEAD, HEART AND HAND OUTSTRETCHED:

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

by KENNETH EBLE

To right-thinking men everywhere, college football is and has been from its inception a beastly sport. Its players are snake-hipped and ox-headed; its coaches have the guile of foxes and the hides of elephants; its supporters roar like the lion and bray like the ass. Yet the beast survives. Over almost every college campus its banner flies: head in helmet, heart on a chalk-striped field, hand outstretched.

The alchemy which unites pigskin and egg-head is as mysterious as the reasons why some college presidents become positive boobies when they contemplate the glories of their athletic programs. Every year, college professors damn big-time athletics. Every two or three years, a committee meets to investigate. Every decade, writers summarize athletics' sorry record. Seldom has so thoroughly discredited an activity maintained such vigorous life and in such high-principled company.

What is new, if anything, about this old sordid story is that college athletics today have won full acceptance as legitimate university activities, and with acceptance, tacit approval of practices which even a backward school, much less a major university, might have frowned upon twenty-five years ago. College athletics thrive today chiefly because of corrupt practices which have been incorporated into codes of legitimate conduct.

Initially, intercollegiate athletics gained a place in the universities, insofar as academic men had anything to do with it, as a result of idealism, wistfulness, and expediency. *Mens sana in corpore sano* was the classical ideal which obscured the dubious relationship. The wistfulness which men who spend their lives chasing abstractions often feel toward violent physical contact lent attractiveness to the ideal. For university presidents facing the necessity of distilling raw animal spirits into purer forms, football seemed a likely expedient. That it could add to a college's fame and increase its income made its expediency certain.

Once established, college athletics drew heavily upon ambition, pride, and sentimentality. In the Midwest, where football frenzy was passed on from the East, personal sentiments were mixed with the universities' ambitions and the states' pride. Schools without traditions manufactured them. In Iowa, a pig became one of the spoils of victory. He was called Floyd of Rosedale and was probably the only resident of the state who didn't much care whether Iowa beat Minnesota. All over the land, the newspapers ground out stories about heart and grit and playing the game.

Today, these simpler impulses of the past have been largely replaced by the philosophy of mercenary idealism: the outstretched hand and the question, "How much?" An army of recruiters sells the full free ride like pardoners peddling indulgences. An eternity of losing seasons yawns

for the coach who fails to exact his tithes. "At Iowa State," said the young coach who was leaving for Texas A. & M., "I had very little money to develop my athletic dreams. There was little money in the budget, little money for recruiting athletes and not much in the way of facilities to attract the athletes we could contact. There is no comparison between our facilities now at College Station and at Iowa State. For example, we have seven new cars assigned to the athletic department, and I can't wait to get home to see our new athletic dormitory. We have spaces for 92 student-athletes in this new building and the entire building is air-conditioned and we have wall-to-wall carpeting."

Recruiting is at the center of the corruption which marks big-time college sports. In 1929, the Carnegie investigation called subsidizing and recruiting "the most disgraceful phase" of intercollegiate athletics. Today, recruiting flourishes, sanctioned by a code which is not so much a guide to conduct as a measure of earning power. Under the NCAA regulations, when financial aid to an athlete "exceeds commonly accepted educational expenses (tuition and fees, room and board, books, and not to exceed \$15 per month for laundry) . . . it shall be considered to be 'pay' for participation." The principles regulating recruiting activities are equally delicate. Coaches cannot offer more financial inducement than the free ride; each college gets to pay for the prospect's visit to the campus one time "and one time only"; the prospect cannot bring along relatives or girl friends except at his own expense; entertainments are restricted to two days and two nights and must not be "excessive." It is as if banks condoned embezzlement as long as the embezzlers followed the regulations set forth by the National Board of Peculation.

How far athletics have developed in thirty years can be roughly measured by comparing present legitimate practices with the practices criticized in the Carnegie Foundation report. Henry S. Pritchett summarized the findings:

The paid coach, the special training tables, the costly sweaters and extensive journeys in special Pullman cars, the recruiting from the high school, the demoralizing publicity showered on the players, the devotion of an undue proportion of time to training, the devices for putting a desirable athlete, but a weak scholar, across the hurdles of the examinations—these ought to stop and the intercolle-

and intramural sports be brought back to a stage in which they can be enjoyed by a large number of students and where they do not involve an expenditure of time and money wholly at variance with any ideal of honest study.

None of these practices have stopped. The NCAA, which shared the feeling for reform in the 1920's, has brought most of these activities in under the code. That those involved in athletics still find ways to violate the rules proves that intercollegiate athletics does, indeed, sharpen the wits. The recurring scandals—basketball fixing, cheating, tampering with academic records, condoned brutality, contract-jumping, slush funds—suggest that weakening the code is no way to strengthen the character.

For the athletic mess, the universities have themselves to blame. The NCAA, though top-heavy in its administration with coaches and athletic directors, is a college and university body. As long ago as 1922, it adopted a resolution urging "absolute faculty control" of athletics. And though faculty members of football universities know how far from "absolute" even absolute faculty control is, they probably have more control than they have ever exercised. The reasons they haven't exercised it are not hard to find.

In the first place, American colleges and universities have never been much concerned with the intellectual life. The colleges and universities that do honor the intellectual life are those like Reed, Antioch, Chicago, Johns Hopkins, which do not maintain big-time athletics, or those, like the Ivy League schools, which have achieved in recent years a measure of de-emphasis. It is well to remember that the level of intellectual life in the Ivy League schools when football grew to power was probably not much higher than it is in the state universities today.

In the state universities, now the chief supporters of inflated athletic programs, the intellectual life is the concern of a small group at best. The liberal arts college within the state university is often the most keen in its criticism of the university's athletic practices, but even within this college, faculty members hold widely differing views. Some genuinely enjoy the game. Others tolerate it as one among many human follies. Many are creatures of habit, and being in the stadium on Saturday afternoons is not much

different from being in the super market on Saturday mornings.

When Phi Beta Kappa refused to grant new chapters to institutions whose aid to athletes was out of proportion to aid granted other students, faculty members from some liberal arts colleges objected to such a firm stand. They pointed out, with some justice, that the regulations were not being applied to existing Phi Beta Kappa chapters. With less justice and a shrinking sense of responsibility, they also argued that the liberal arts college was too small to control university policy and that the liberal arts college breathed a purer air than that of the fieldhouse. Phi Beta Kappa has stood by its principles, but it is virtually the only organization within or related to the academic cosmos that has.

In the second place, college and university faculties are singularly inept at doing anything about their problems. Academic protests against low salaries have been as numerous, and as futile, as those against athletics. Members of faculty senates, fierce exponents of democracy, inveigh against the fraternity and sorority system and then approve the appointment of one more assistant dean of student life to assist in inter-fraternity affairs. Cheating in the classroom, autocracy in the administration building, and an entangling bureaucracy throughout the campus are other problems which were long ago placed on the committee agenda and which have never been taken off.

Third, the athletic departments have flummoxed the academicians by playing their kind of game. They have become research departments, amassing books and monographs, acquiring equipment, and graduating M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s. An academic department of any kind is as hard to dislodge as an ape from a tree. When it has stored up the fruits of research, it is invulnerable. On the playing field, coaches operate within a complex of scouts, spies, and spotters equipped with binoculars, field phones, and wrist radios. Off the field, they read monographs like "Two and Three Dimensional Slide Images Used with Tachistoscopic Training Techniques in Instructing Football Players in Defenses," or articles beginning, "Bat selection is a profoundly important task." Such absurdities of title and profundities of thought are, of course, not uncommon to other academic periodicals,

but no other journals are so solemn and pious. Only in *The Athletic Journal*, "America's First Coaching Magazine," is one likely to find the "Huddle Prayer," specially written for the Pop Warner Conference for Kiddie Football by Father Cavanaugh of Notre Dame, Rabbi Max Klein, and Norman Vincent Peale:

Grant us the strength, Dear Lord, to play
This game with all our might;
And while we're doing it we pray
You'll keep us in your sight;
That we may never say or do
A thing that gives offense to you.

Finally, the vast momentum the game has picked up over the years rolls over the most strenuous efforts at reform. Today's players become the I-men and the coaches for the next generation, and in many states, the high school principals and superintendents. College publicity departments grind out the copy upon which the daily newspapers feed. To the sports fraternity, as they call themselves, the existence of big-time athletics in the universities is proof enough that they are desirable and relevant activities. "While there will be a segment of the egghead species in educational circles," the sports editor of my daily paper wrote recently, "that abhors even the hint of physical exertion aside from the pursuit and capture of academic degrees, the average professor looks upon athletic activity in a true light."

If any substantial changes take place in the conduct of college athletics, they will not come about because of the actions of conscience-stricken men. Rather they will be the result of athletic practices themselves and of changing conditions in higher education. There is some evidence that athletic handouts are already causing indigestion. Bud Wilkinson recently warned his fellow coaches that students weren't going out for football. "Part of it," he said, "is probably due to the fact that we all contact athletes. If a boy doesn't get a scholarship then he apparently feels unwanted." Ten years ago at Oklahoma, the freshman squad consisted of 110 athletes. Last year, only 37 turned out, 27 of whom were on athletic scholarships. The glory of varsity sports, always a dubious reward for the hamburger squads, is today pretty much proportional to the cash received, and the price of

hamburger is going up. The cost of athletic programs is as hard to find out as an office-mate's salary, but certainly the majority of big athletic programs lose money, some a great deal of money. Partly because of the expense, the number of colleges playing football dropped from 709 in 1940, to 690 in 1947, and 623 in 1959. As costs increase, even more will give up the sport.

The recruiting of players has had another consequence. In football, players are bought by the pound; in basketball, by the yard. High school athletes of ordinary dimensions, however impressive their records, are not prime prospects for athletic scholarships. The catering to exceptional physical specimens has separated college athletics from the spectators and from the undergraduates whose duty it is to whip up frenzy for the game. Gigantism, specialization of function, and intensive coaching have not made the team sports better spectacles. Despite tinkering with the rules, basketball threatens to score itself out of public interest and football to expire from interminable delays.

The changing character of higher education also seems to be having an impact upon big-time athletics. Columbia's president was reported in my local paper as telling his alumni, "I hope you may feel that some of the prestige Columbia has lost in football in these years has been offset by the award of four Nobel Prizes to Columbia men in the last three years and of another Nobel Prize this year to another Columbia College graduate." The chancellor of the University of Denver, Chester Alter, flatly predicted that the days of big-time football were numbered. California, a West Coast reporter wrote, is going Ivy League. And James L. Morrill, retiring president of Minnesota, defended a losing coach: "Athletic entertainment is not the primary purpose of the University of Minnesota or the justification for its existence."


This last remark from the Midwest, a region passionately attached to football, basketball, and funny papers, is a significant one. There is a logic in thinking that the Big Ten schools may before long de-emphasize. Universities like Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, and others have the physical facilities, the faculties, and can select the students which would make them primarily intellectual institutions. States are already seeing the wisdom and the economy of using the smaller

public and private colleges as the general undergraduate college and of reserving the state university for a *higher* higher education. The subordination of sports to intellect in the Big Ten would do much to restore sanity to college athletics.

I have the feeling that even now, big-time sports are maintaining themselves largely on the accumulated glories of the past. This would explain why, on college faculties, the support for football comes from aging professors of the classics as well as from young professors of athletic administration. Those faculty members nearing retirement age now were undergraduates in the golden days of the sport. They had Knute Rockne in the flesh. The young professors had to settle for Pat O'Brien. Those now in the graduate school lack even so much. Students, it seems to me, are less "gung ho" than before the war. Band directors tell me it's hard to get the band out on Saturday afternoons, and at pep rallies on our campus, the players frequently outnumber the boosters.

If athletics do subside, it will not be because of moral indignation, and its decline will be attended by wailing and weeping and gnashing of teeth. Recognition of a changing attitude toward sports, if such an attitude comes about, will come slowly to the booster clubs, the athletic departments, and the newspapers. These groups have never been disturbed by the disparity between the shoddiness of athleticism and the high purposes of a university. They have preserved the myths of sport long after such myths have lost what small part of truth they may once have possessed.

The melancholy truth is that reached by Plato long ago. Man's glory is his reason, but it exists at the small end of the triangle. He carries with him "the heavy bear," and in the end as in the beginning, the beast will have him. Civilization is still a clearing in the jungle, and if apes gambol in the public square, one may be dismayed but should not be surprised.


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DEMOCRACY AND BABEL

by IRVING KRISTOL

I do not mean to suggest that this debate was

The truth of the matter is that there has not been any Great Debate on any important public question since the Presidential campaign of 1920, when the issue was posed of the United States joining the League of Nations. True, that was a pretty sorry specimen of a debate, with demagoguery rampant on a field of disillusionment. But at least the issue was clearly defined, and positions were taken, defended, argued. Since then, we have experienced our greatest depres-

sion and our greatest war; we have witnessed the most startling transformation of the American economy, the American society, the American governmental structure in at least a century; we have, with the advent of the H-bomb, confronted what is perhaps the most important technological innovation in the entire history of the human race. On all of these matters our policies have been contrived without benefit of anything that can genuinely be called a Great Debate. Sometimes one thinks that future historians, if there are any, will catalogue these decades as the era of sleepwalking.

It is often said that this phenomenon is the result of a conformist temper, of a "homogenization" of politics, of the substitution of public relations for political discourse. There is some truth in this; but it does not come close to adding up to the whole truth. For it overlooks the fact that you cannot have a debate without a platform around which the *intelligently* curious can assemble, to listen, to observe, to react. American politics has no such platform. It *used* to have one; and its name was Congress. But this is no longer the case.

It is doubtless just as well that the circulation of the *Congressional Record* is as restricted as it is. Democratic government in the United States would be hard put to survive a more indiscriminate distribution. It is not only that there is much silliness in it—the sort of thing *The New Yorker* loves to quote in its "Wind from Capitol Hill Department." These items, as a matter of fact, are less frequent than one might suspect. Most of the speeches are respectable enough, and there is no lack of solemnity. What is lacking is energy and forcefulness. The most disheartening thing about Congressional rhetoric is that so much of it is obviously "for the record." The first man who candidly announces that he has changed his mind after listening to a Congressional speech will have made a little niche for himself in modern American history.

And yet there was a time when a person seriously interested in politics did not feel it (or at least admit it to be) permissible to make up his mind on a major public issue without first having heard from Webster, or Clay, or Calhoun. Their speeches were actually collected into books

—not campaign documents but honest-to-goodness, hard-covered, multi-volumed books. That was a long time ago, of course. What has happened since?

It is important to dodge the pitfalls of nostalgia, and to avoid taking refuge in the convenient formula of there-were-giants-in-those-days, etc. They weren't giants, really, though a few of them were certainly big men. And if they were eloquent, it was often a rather tedious eloquence. Take, for instance, Webster's famous exordium in his reply to Haynes (1830):

Mr. President, when the mariner has been tossed, for many days, in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate his prudence; and before we float farther on the waves of this debate . . . etc.

The present minority leader in the Senate, Everett Dirksen, could come up with this sort of thing any time he set his mind to it. Indeed, he frequently does, to the annoyance or amusement of his colleagues. Nor is he a lonely example. There are many others who could wax magniloquent, if they felt it worth taking the pains to do so. But they do not bother.

And why should they? If any Congressman were to state beforehand his intention of delivering a long, reasoned, and eloquent speech on any matter, the first result would be to drive most of his colleagues into the cloakroom, or to an even further remove. They would be followed by the press corps, who will already possess a mimeographed copy of the speech (in which case, why listen?) or, should this by some misadventure not be provided, will feel it an affront to their dignity that they should be required to sit and listen and take notes (are they common clerks?). From the next morning's newspaper, a reader might learn that such-and-such a Congressman had such-and-such an opinion on this or that. The fact that this opinion was expressed in the course of a speech on the floor of the House or Senate may or may not get mentioned.

The plain fact is that Congressional rhetoric simply and inherently lacks the force to make an impression. It may make good sense, but it does not signify—which is to say, it does not affect public policy. The reason Congressional

speech-making is so indifferent is because Congress is now, in the American order, a second-rate power. It is not what is said, or how it is said, that is at fault. It is who says it.

A comparison with the situation in the British Parliament is revealing. Here, too, one must avoid romantic nostalgia. Gladstone's most stirring addresses are almost unbelievably boring to read today. ("You cannot fight against the future, time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their might and majesty . . . etc.") There have been truly great documents in political theory that have originated as speeches in the House of Commons. Burke's speech on conciliation with America is such a one, Macaulay's speech on Jewish emancipation is another. But these were speeches delivered to empty benches; their impact derived from the printed versions. And while there is still a formal prohibition against reading the text of a speech in the House—one is supposed to speak to the members, not at them—anyone who actually raised a point of order on this issue would be regarded as a petty obstructionist. Ministers mumble their way through speeches they never wrote; and Oxford dons deplore the decay of Parliamentary oratory.

Nevertheless, to American eyes, debate in the House of Commons seems far more real and weighty than in our Congress. As it is, for two good reasons.

First of all, political advancement means getting the approval of the party leaders, rather than of any constituency. And there is no better way to commend oneself to these leaders than by showing oneself capable of arguing the party's case effectively in the House. A man with this talent may expect the leadership to find him a safe seat, and perhaps eventually a Ministry. So he works hard on his speeches—will even sometimes take the pains to memorize them beforehand.

Secondly, and mainly, his speeches will be listened to because they usually represent one of the two major political forces in the country: the Government or the Opposition. He speaks with authority; and is therefore heard with respect. True, the tight party control of Members predetermines the result of the voting; a Mem-

ber's speech is as unlikely to change anyone's vote as is a Congressman's. But these debates are the basic substance of politics in Britain. They are what *happens*—what the newspapers write about, what politicians gossip about. Every speech is a performance before a national audience; and every speaker knows it.

Now, this has obviously little relevance to the American scene. For better or worse (and there is something to be said on both sides) our political parties are not tightly-knit instruments of government or opposition, but loose associations of individual politicians whose main loyalties are to their various constituencies. We do not have a parliamentary government. Our system is that of a balance of powers; and this balance has been heavily tilted against Congress in recent decades.

If one wants a more meaningful Anglo-American equation, one can say (with only a little exaggeration) that Congress is more comparable to the House of Lords than to the House of Commons. Its powers are primarily negative, not positive. It does not govern but serves as a check on irresponsible government. A speech in the House of Lords is, in itself, as little a significant political act as is a speech in Congress. Oddly enough, the speeches in the Lords are frequently far superior to those in the Commons. But one has to be physically present at the sessions to know this, for they attract only negligible attention.

The "decline of Congress" is a phenomenon that has been much written about. But if one wishes to appreciate just what this means concretely, it is worth recalling that, in 1908, when Theodore Roosevelt sent a draft of a bill to the Senate, that body voted a denunciation of such outrageous presidential presumption. Thus, only fifty years ago, Congress considered itself to be the law-making authority for these United States. Today, of course, practically all legislation of any significance is drafted by the Executive, while Congress restricts itself to advising, amending, and occasionally rejecting.

By far the most important work of Congress is done in committee, and one would have to be a peculiar kind of person indeed to make speeches to one's fellow committeemen—especially since most meetings are in closed session.

A committee is a place where the details of legislation are picked over, and where discussion of larger issues is clearly beside the point. One haggles, one argues, one defends one's sacred cows; all questions of general policy are avoided as a waste of precious time.

This is not the case, to be sure, with Congressional investigating committees; and there are grounds for asserting that the investigatory role is by far the most useful and important one of Congress today. It is only before such committees that one can get echoes of the genuinely important policy debates that take place within the Joint Chiefs of Staffs, the National Security Council, the Cabinet, the President's advisory staff. But they are, necessarily, muffled echoes, which as frequently confuse as inform. The Executive is grimly jealous of its prerogatives, particularly of its recently-acquired ones. And each official of the Executive arm clearly and inevitably regards it as his duty to avoid, in his testimony before Congress, saying more than he can help.

This state of affairs is alleviated somewhat by the fact that not only government officials but also independent experts are called to testify. Yet this, though certainly worthwhile, is not as helpful as one might have hoped. It is in the nature of experts to disagree with one another; and before a Congressional committee, all they can do in their fleeting appearances is to repeat the various opinions which they have previously expressed in learned journals and newspaper interviews. There is no mechanism by which the issues can be pursued so that public opinion might in the end reach a reasonable conclusion. Thus, we know that Edward Teller and Hans Bethe, both distinguished atomic scientists, have long disagreed on the question of nuclear disarmament. Now that they have testified before the Hollifield Committee, we know little more than that their disagreement persists. The clash of their opinions was valuable; but it could not, in and of itself, persuade us one way or the other.

So it is that Congress, having suffered a decline as a policy-making body, has also ceased to be a public forum—the public forum where authoritative opinions contest for the mastery of the public mind. This is doubtless an irreversible development. America as a world pow-

er, engaged in a struggle for survival, cannot afford to have its major policies devised by men whose prime responsibility and loyalty are to local constituencies, for which they are the spokesmen. The national interest requires a national leadership; and this can only be provided by the Executive.

Today, the most vital political energy in the United States arises out of the interaction of public opinion and the Presidency. (And I would distinguish between "public opinion"—which is thoughtful opinion—and "popular opinion," which is not opinion at all but merely sentiment.) Out of this interaction come most of the crucial decisions of foreign and domestic policy. But "public opinion" is not a self-existent and self-reproducing entity. It takes shape and life from its mate—from that governmental leadership to which it is wedded in democratic union. Yet intercourse between these two is, under present conditions, intermittent, haphazard, inconsummate.

It is the Presidential press conference which is today the closest thing to a genuine public forum. It is here that the Chief Executive, standing before an assembly of journalists, attempts to define in an authoritative way the issues confronting the nation. These journalists represent the power of public opinion far more effectively than does any corresponding group of Congressmen; and each of them is, individually, no less influential than are elected representatives. Nevertheless, the press conference is necessarily a slapdash affair. Because the journalists are, after all, only journalists and not elected representatives—while they may represent the people they do not draw their prerogatives from the people—the press conference can do no more than offer the President an opportunity to debate an issue with himself. This is better than no debate at all, but it hardly meets a democratic bill of particulars. For while it has been known to happen that a President will lose such a debate with himself, it is never clear who or what has won.

It may be said that there is certainly no lack of discussion of public issues and public policy by the press, on TV, in magazines. This is true enough; but such discussion *in and of itself* is as likely to confuse as to enlighten. For this dis-

cussion takes place in an area where one opinion is—or is taken to be—as good as another. And the whole point of a “Great Debate” is that the alternatives must (1) be reduced to a manageable number—preferably two; and (2) be represented and articulated by political leadership capable of assuming office and implementing their policy, should they persuade the people of its correctness. Widespread discussion among powerless (if influential) writers and commentators is a necessary precondition to the formation of an intelligent public opinion; but it is no substitute for that wedding of opinion with power which ultimately defines policy.

So the American Democracy, plagued and perplexed by problems whose complexity and import are without parallel in human history,

is constantly promised a Great Debate—and is given a babel of voices—or a TV spectacular. The people—at least the active members of this body—need to know. But before they can know, they must listen. And before they can listen, they must be spoken to. It is only if these conditions are met that truth can ever prevail over mere opinion, the common good over particular interests, prejudices, and passions.



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Autumn Journey

by **BABETTE DEUTSCH**

That gold loading the roadside bough
Seems massy as the hill's heaped treasure
Beyond it. Till, as light as tow,
One willow: so a smile of pleasure
Relieves wealth's heavier concerns.
Then rain. And now the glory earns
What few relinquishments allow,
The grace of a diminished measure.

Here autumn stays, if momentarily,
Between October and November
While in a circle round some tree
That grows like an enormous ember
Upthrust, a round of rosy ore
Lays flat, a fire on her floor.
But greying skies close in, and we
Have less to see than to remember.

Under a cloud the season burns
So differently. Its fires tender
A warmth that, faltering, returns
Enriched by old, by absent splendor.
Yet pain renews itself as fast,
Not fierce, but strong enough to last.
As the leaves fly, the clawed heart learns
The fugitive meaning of surrender.

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AMERICAN OPERA:

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CURTAINS AND OVERTURES

An irreverent young composer predicts curtains for "that decayed form of opera" that Americans know best (i.e. have heard most)—and the rise of a new sort: theatrical, vernacular, and very much our own.

by JACK BEESON

It is the ideal of drama by way of music—*dramma per musica*, as the inventors of opera called it—that gives continuity to the history of serious music in the theater. For 350 years the public, critics, and some musicians have at intervals proclaimed the end of "the bastard art," when in fact they were only announcing the death of this or that decaying manifestation of the *idea* of opera, the repeal of those operatic conventions that have become merely conventional, ineffective, or absurd.

And usually the obituary is accompanied by the boosting of some new form of drama-by-way-of-music from the other side of the tracks, never called opera but called ballad opera, *opéra comique*, a play with music, musical comedy, or something of the sort. The lively youngster pursues his career in the outskirts theaters, attracts more and better librettists, composers, singers, and money; makes his way into the big house; and in his senescence is ennobled, and railed at, in the name of—opera.

And so it is with great enthusiasm that I celebrate the end of opera in the United States now—or rather, the end of that decayed form

of opera that has for too long in this country masqueraded as *dramma per musica*. And so it is, too, that I urge on a new contender to the title.

But first, what is the state of that which goes by the name of opera in these United States? The Casual Operagoer knows that it is a bad one. At the mention of the word opera, he thinks first of "the Met," as indeed, in some ways, he should. And everyone knows that the Metropolitan Opera is always hard up, though the Met is the one American company belonging to the International Big League. The Chicago, San Francisco, and New York City Center Opera houses and the dozens of smaller civic and "semi-civic" companies operate for very short seasons. Even the Casual Operagoer knows that young singers trained in conservatory and university workshops must still go abroad to obtain sufficient professional experience, and when they come home there's no place to go; lack of enough money (reflecting public apathy) prevents the production of new works, inhibits the revival of worthwhile old works, and makes difficult a well-coordinated production of any work, old or new. The Casual Operagoer also knows: singers can't act, are often physically unsuited to their roles if not downright repulsive, can't be understood even when they sing in English, and can't sing the way Caruso, Scotti, and Muzio did; new works are seldom masterpieces and it is dull to hear the same old ones over and over; tickets are expensive and hard to get. If one *must* have music in the theater, why not settle for a musical comedy, in which the sets and the people are attractive? Or, if one must have excitement, why not see a good play or go to the movies?

The Casual Operagoer may just barely tolerate that seemingly aimless passion on the Saturday afternoon radio and the efforts of the local opera company and rare touring company. In some dim way he finds them musically satisfying—uplifting even—but they have little to do with theater, more to do with social obligation. If, on the other hand, he genuinely likes opera, he is probably enamored of the musical side only, possibly only the singing, maybe only the high notes.

Shall we dismiss the Casual Operagoer out

of hand for his ignorance of what opera is, his ignorance of the vast operatic repertory developed over 350 years? I think not. Such ignorance is forgivable, if only because the bulk of repertory performed, recorded, and broadcast in this country consists in fact of a few of the numerous masterpieces of the past served up with a few half-dead potboilers. The latter serve as inexpensive vehicles for expensive singers and are performed with the notion (still too often justified) that audiences prefer a hackneyed second-rate work with star performers to an unfamiliar work of value.

An Italian, Frenchman, German, or Russian hears a much larger repertory of operas, most of them conceived in the vernacular and performed by his countrymen. Because he is familiar with the indigenous opera and its historical development, the European has the further advantage of being aware that there are many styles of serious musical theater, styles formed by the personalities of languages and the requirements of varying musical and theatrical conventions.

An American operagoer has no such repertory of works conceived in English. Paradoxically, his operatic outlook is further narrowed by an acquaintance with an international repertory sung by international casts—in large measure American—who blur with their "international" accents and sloppy enunciation the verbal and vocal differences that exist between languages and blur with their acting habits (designed to fit into anybody's production, anywhere, with a minimum of rehearsal) the musical and dramatic differences that define the few operatic styles our opera companies *do* present.

Confronted as they are by a limited and unvarying selection of what are said all to be masterpieces, all performed in the same way, it is not surprising that ordinary operagoers—as well as those know-it-alls, the "opera lovers"—should have but a limited idea of what opera is, or can be, all about. Nor is it surprising that they may be growing diffident about "the repertory."

That peculiar mixture of dramatic and musical ingredients that guides the selection and performance of today's repertory no longer satisfies any audiences but the very easily

pleased and is demanded by none. Sign of the times: the City Center one evening last fall substituted a new work for a routine *Butterfly* that wasn't selling; when even a routine *Butterfly* does not sell, the world is changing. But of course even sold-out operas run deficits, for repertory opera cannot be enjoyed in theaters large enough for the box office receipts to cover the inescapably large production costs. And neither private nor foundation patronage is any longer willing to foot the bill for that which boasts only respectability and the good name of opera. But seasoned money is being made available for the creators and craftsmen who think that opera must be, as it has always been whenever it has flourished in the past, a *theatrical* event in which drama comes about by means of music. A year ago the Ford Foundation, having already backed three short seasons of exclusively American operas at the City Center, granted \$950,000 toward the production (and creation, if need be) of eighteen new operas in our four steadiest repertory theaters.

Because it is the ideal of opera as drama that animates the new activity, performance and creation are intimately related. In all productions of the NBC-TV Opera, in very many of the productions of the New York City Center, in some of the new productions of our other major opera houses (at least while they remain new and before the original casts change), and remarkably often in the productions of our best university and conservatory opera workshops, there is a new awareness of the old ideal.

If the Casual Operagoer is startled to discover that such vivid productions of pieces in repertory force him to broaden his sense of what opera is—or can be—a new opera may seem to be something else altogether. Even a New York drama critic was confused by the Broadway production of Gian-Carlo Menotti's opera, *The Medium*, imagining that Menotti had invented a new theatrical form. The disguise? An excellent libretto and cogent music, a cast of first-rate singing actors intelligently directed, effective sets, costumes, and lighting, and clearly projected English words—the disguises with which all opera should be provided. It should be added that the word opera did not

appear in the advance publicity or on the *Playbill*.

The important new work in opera is general, geographically dispersed, and of two sorts. In their productions of a larger variety of works from the present and from the recent and distant past, dramatic and musical directors are striving for a more complete interpenetration of the dramatic and musical aspects of opera; and, since the Thirties, composers in this country have been creating a new "national" sort of opera shaped deliberately by the genius of the English language and the special characteristics of the American theatrical and musical life.

Language is the touchstone for all this activity. That a composer sets texts in his native tongue is understood by everybody. That a composer living outside his native land composes to a text in the language of his adopted audience is infrequently remarked, but none the less true. That composers from Weber to the present have almost always insisted that their works be translated if performed abroad is never mentioned, which is the more remarkable because it is the composer who, in one sense, has most to lose by translation. The composer's adjustment of his musical idea to the exact sound and meaning of the word is disturbed even in the most careful translation. But he prefers these dislocations to the more dangerous distortions that occur when an audience, unfamiliar with the language being sung, has only the most general idea of the dramatic action and, worse, has been taught to consider a detailed knowledge of the action and words unnecessary—perhaps even unpleasant.

The comfortable feeling that one is playing square with the composer if only one performs his operas in the original language is not enough; the purists' insistence that we perform all operas in the original language makes sense only when joined with an insistence that the singers' pronunciation be flawless, that their vocal production be in keeping with the language of the opera, and that their acting (insofar as it can be separated from singing and enunciation) be in harmony with the dramatic idiom of the work. I know of no spectacle more absurd than an ill-set, ill-lit, poorly staged *Pelléas* sung in that kind of international French as little understood by the Americans and French in the

audience as it is by the UN assemblage on stage.

There was a time when the Metropolitan Opera carried out its ideal of linguistic and stylistic fidelity by housing, in effect, three companies, the Italian, French, and German wings. With a penchant for Italian opera and a corner on the market of Italian singers as well as many gifted Americans, the Met can still put on some of the best Italian opera in the world. But the German wing has atrophied and the French wing disappeared altogether.

It is important that we continue to be able to hear the standard operas exactly as created by their librettists and composers—if we wish to. If they would practice what they advertise, institutions like the Metropolitan could continue to hold the mirror up to Art in this fashion, but I suspect that in the future we shall travel abroad to see works in their original settings or witness productions of touring European opera companies in our own theaters, just as we now see in the United States the Grand Kabuki and ideal performances of Molière and Goldoni by the Comédie Française and the Piccolo Teatro di Milano.

Composers insist that their operas be translated when performed abroad because they know best that the idea of musical theater is traduced if the audience does not grasp the meaning of the text at the moment it is sung. The interpenetration of the word and tone is often so complete (not to speak of instrumental and vocal inflection, gesture, and *mise-en-scène*) that neither element has more than partial meaning without the other.

Few Americans are aware of the extent to which even the best-known passages of opera are musically dependent upon the verbal detail. If the listener does not understand the words, he is enjoying a pretty tune or a tone-poem for orchestra and voice generally applicable to the broad outlines of the action, no more; the complete sense of the music resides in its mirroring the text, which was in turn shaped by the librettist in accordance with the special needs of music. The following fragments from *Don Giovanni*—almost any would do—suggest the importance of understanding the text at the moment it is sung and the necessity and difficulty of translation for those who do not under-

stand Italian. Leporello is cataloguing for Donna Elvira, a seducee of the Don, the types of women the Don favors.

LEPORELLO

REDUCTION FOR PIANO

nel-la bru-na la co-stan-za, nel-la bian-ca la dol-cez-za.

p *f*

Leporello remarks that the Don praises the brunettes for constancy (*nella bruna la costanza*) and the blonde ones for sweetness (*nella bianca la dolcezza*). His remarks are set to music which is an exact reflection and expansion of the words: constancy—*costanza*—is suggested by a vigorous vocal line and a forceful accompaniment; blonde sweetness—*dolcezza*—by a softer, more sentimental setting. A listener who knows nothing of the words can enjoy the music for itself, I suppose. But he misses all the fun, and even in context the orchestra's outburst followed by the gooey *dolcezza* phrase makes little sense on purely musical grounds. (In the most readily available American edition of the score all verbal, dramatic and musical effect is perverted by the translator, who turns *nella bruna la costanza* into "Then the dark ones are so tender!" Sung with vigor to Mozart's vocal phrase, this line turns the Don cannibalistic.) It is not easy to find good English equivalents to Mozart's and Da Ponte's intentions and at the same time to provide the singer with a singable and easily pro-

jected text, but it can be done. The translations of W. H. Auden, mostly for the NBC-TV Opera, and those of John Gutman, mostly for the Met, are all first-rate. Marc Blitzstein's Englishing of the *Threepenny Opera* is the equal of the excellent German original by Brecht.

Leporello continues his list of the Don's conquests:

LEPORELLO

REDUCTION FOR PIANO

e la gran-da

sto-

la pic-ci-na, la pic-ci-na, la pic-ci-na

Mozart amplifies the text—and at the same time inflates it so that Leporello's own flamboyance will be characterized—by building a crescendo with *è la grande maestosa* to represent the grand, majestic type. A loud, long-held high note on the accented syllable of *maestosa* produces a climax that occurs too soon in the aria, from the purely musical point of view. But the climax is then turned into a giggle with *la piccina* (the tiny or cute one), who is naturally represented by tiny note values. Without the words, the whole passage is barely comprehensible.

Audiences ignorant of the text are bad for singers. The singer's knowledge that the audience does not understand what he is singing about has the most disastrous effect on his acting style. He must mug or do something funny to show there is a verbal joke. He must ham it up to show he's being serious about some-

thing. He has recourse to that sign language peculiar to the untranslated operatic stage: *il mio cor* is rendered with the hand to the heart, *tu* must be pointed at, the sign for *assassino* is the clenched fist, preferably held on high. I do not know the exact verbal equivalents of the swimming motions made by dramatic sopranos. With all this exertion, how many Americans in the opera house can know what the Italians and Italian-Americans are laughing about in *Don Giovanni* or *Figaro*? Or why there is weeping?

Happily, for the fooleries I have described, it will not much longer be necessary to labor the cause of opera in English: the use of English enlivens the performance of translated "standard" and contemporary works from abroad and conditions many of the characteristics of the new works created in our language. And it is no longer even necessary to labor the general cause of opera in these United States. The eighteenth annual survey of the American operatic scene, published by the magazine *Opera News*, tells us that there were nearly 4,000 performances of opera in this country in the season before last. It is not important how this figure compares with those that might be dug out of Germany, where some fifty theaters present opera throughout all or part of an eleven-month season. Neither is it so important that many of our 700 producing organizations are short-lived, modest groups formed for the purpose of "putting on a show," with little money and two pianos substituted for the orchestra. What is more remarkable is that the number of performances and the number of modest and immodest producing groups has increased fivefold since the Forties. So much for the Casual Operagoer. University and conservatory workshops flourish. The supporting institutions serve as American equivalents to the European state subsidies. They provide continuity, good theaters, trained staffs, adequate budgets, and respect-without-fear for the box office. What the workshops lack in star performers they can sometimes make up for in generous time for rehearsal. As for taste at what politicians insist on calling "the grass roots": a rarely heard opera by Handel, fully staged by the Met's Herbert Graf, was produced this year in Bloom-

ington, Indiana; and Dallas has enjoyed Cal-
las as we shall not see her in New York.

The most startling fact in the Opera Survey is that of the 4,000 performances last season, more than half were of operas written since 1925, and most of these were by American composers!

With such a large number of new operas being performed so often under such varied circumstances—from the City Center to the Sunday School room—we begin to recognize what mixture of dramatic and musical ingredients is demanded by the audience and what the “new” librettists and composers expect of their audiences.

It is not surprising that our audiences desire cogent librettos at least related in subject matter to that “realism” they are accustomed to in the spoken theater, in the films and on television. It is only natural that our librettists should often be influenced by the same ruling realism and that, in addition, they should wish to temper it with that sense of the unreal and the irrational that is the province of opera, which is unrealistic by definition. So it is that a husband-and-wife squabble of the most squalid sort leads, in Mark Bucci’s *Tale for a Deaf Ear*, to three arias in as many languages and historical styles; in Menotti’s *Consul* and Nabokov’s *Holy Devil* (about Rasputin) the presence of music leads to imaginative flights that would be unacceptable in spoken dramatizations of these “realistic” subjects. In France and Germany classical tragedy appears regularly in repertory and its subject matter is frequently reworked by contemporary playwrights. It is natural, therefore, for a Frenchman or German to compose a *Médée* or *Antigone*. Molière is still popular on the European spoken and lyric stages, but he has no success here; the domestic manners of Americans do not inspire affection for the comedy of manners. The American composer more often than not searches in our own past or present for subject matter, whether in the form of legend or historical event, or in extant plays or novels. In part he is following the lead of his collaborators, who are ever more frequently well-established playwrights: to name a few, Lillian Hellman (whose “The Little Foxes” became *Regina*), Philip Barry (whose *White Wings* exists also as

an opera), Tennessee Williams (who has collaborated on occasion with Raffaello de Banfield), and William Saroyan (whose *Hello Out There* I have set).

Audiences also expect to be able to *understand* the English text, not only because of their interest in the drama, but also because they are conditioned by those popular musicals in which any kind of singing is acceptable so long as the words are understood; and listeners are also conditioned by mechanically reproduced singing over microphone and on recordings, radio, and TV—the voice played up and the accompaniment down. The English language, by the way, is neither better nor worse for singers than any other language and can be clearly projected by any good singer who takes the trouble to enunciate words that have been set correctly by the composer.

Our language is in itself a style determinant in the new operas. English denies the composer the lyric afflatus possible in setting Italian, but on the other hand it provides him with that pulsing, alert, strongly-rhythmed vocal line characteristic of English-speaking composers from Purcell and Stephen Foster to Benjamin Britten and Gershwin. Gian-Carlo Menotti nowhere shows his derivation from the Italian operatic tradition more clearly than in his setting of English words. The setting is usually correct, but it sings with an accent. The accent is thicker but less identifiable in Stravinsky’s *Rake’s Progress*, which must be counted among the major works of the century—in spite of the many infelicities and not infrequent blunders in word setting. At the opposite extreme are Virgil Thomson’s superbly vernacular settings of two libretti by Gertrude Stein, *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *The Mother of Us All*; Thomson’s music virtually disappears into the text it enriches.

To a large extent the new operas are shaped also to fit the performance opportunities offered by the mushrooming workshops and civic companies—the “unofficial” opera. One is reminded of the Little Theater movement which earlier in this century shaped the directions that American play production and playwrighting have taken. Further, just as the development of photography has relieved the painter of some of his former pictorial functions, so the wide-

screen spectacular has relieved the composer of some of his duties as producer of stage pageantry. The contemporary composer and his librettist are content to leave *Aida's* tigers and elephants to Steve Reeves. The lyric investigation of psychological relationships, which is the chief subject matter of contemporary opera, needs a *mise en scène* no larger than that sufficient for, say, *Regina*.

But the composer is not simply the pawn of audiences and economics. He has his own demands to make. He insists that opera be drama by way of music; that opera be distinguished from plays with music, musical plays, and musical comedies by the responsibility the music takes to effect mood, characterization, emotional expression, and structure. The new works vary enormously in their musical styles—from the accessibility of *Down in the Valley* by Kurt Weill, through the warm evocation of things past in Douglas Moore's *Ballad of Baby Doe* and the simulation of the world of Straus and *Ara-bella* in Samuel Barber's *Vanessa*, to the acerbities of Hugo Weisgall's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Most American composers who write in the very advanced musical idioms—whether 12-tone or not—have been unwilling to search for that balance of musical and extra-musical values that is necessary to opera, but which is termed “making concessions” by the composers of the *avant garde*. Most have little affection for the voice as an instrument and less knowledge of the theater. I hope that Roger Sessions' *Montezuma* and Gunther Schuller's projected *Visit* turn out well, for the burgeoning American Opera needs a stiffening of the musical spine, if only to offset operas of easy virtue like Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*. Frequently a work composed with a complex musical vocabulary and grammar finds acceptance more readily in the theater than in the concert hall: the success of Berg's *Wozzeck* is a case in point. But in this country, where the record collection of a sophisticated household is likely to be less venturesome than the pictures on the wall, the American Berg will have a hard time.

It is of no importance whatever whether out of all this activity masterpieces are being written. The word masterpiece is an enzyme created by the bacterial action of critics on the

living body of music. If masterpieces are being written they will be discovered later by those who are today overlooking them. Scarcely any of the established operatic favorites succeeded immediately; most would have failed and disappeared forever if they had got their start under the present hit-or-flop Broadway “system.” Meanwhile, it is sufficient that works are composed and performed, with the usual amounts of pain and pleasure for their creators and their audiences.

If only for purely musical reasons, the American lyric theater—the term most often used for the emergent opera—will not grow *directly* out of the maturing musical comedy as it now exists on Broadway. As it is, cross-fertilization takes place. Real operas, such as those by Blitzstein and Menotti, make occasional appearances on Broadway with refreshing effect on everybody but their financial backers. Quasi-Broadway pieces, *Porgy and Bess* and *Lost in the Stars*, make their way into the opera houses, stir up the snobs, and upset the critics. Excepting the crassly commercial musicals and those operas with highly sophisticated scores, it is sometimes difficult to draw the line between the two genres. I hope it becomes ever more difficult to do so. I know of few moments in opera more musically dramatic, more dramatically musical, than that moment, late at night, when Eliza Doolittle's efforts with “the rain in Spain . . .” finally succeed, and her elation illuminates the stage, transforming the rhythmized prose into vocal melody.

Without forgetting the musical and dramatic heights to which opera can aspire, let us remember the example of *The Magic Flute*: Mozart's opera includes some of his most sublime musical and ethical thought, some of his most personal and complex music, and—as well—slapstick and guileless music designed to appeal to the unsophisticated audiences of a flimsy little theater on the outskirts of Vienna—not so much an opera house as a place for comic operas and musical plays.

An associate professor of music at Columbia, Jack Beeson is the composer of three operas—*The Sweet Bye and Bye*, *Hello Out There*, and *Jonah*—and is at work on his fourth. His essay, “*Magic, Music & Money*,” appeared in the Fall 1958 FORUM.

Reckoning Your Bliss Point

It would seem that the formidable and careful science of economics is standing on, among other things, an assumption about people that no one has ever tested, let alone proved.

by SAUL ENGELBOURG

Can man's wants be satisfied? John Kenneth Galbraith poses this question (among other questions) in his recent controversial book, *The Affluent Society*. "The concept of satiation has very little standing in economics," Galbraith asserts, without pursuing the fact further. And certainly it is a fact, and a curious one: the idea that man's wants are unlimited and satiety impossible has been accepted by most economists without any extended examination and virtually without question. Not that I am going to attempt here to discredit the assumption of insatiability, not that I am even sure this is possible. I simply want to suggest that this very basic assumption in economic theory is at least open to question, and I want to indicate some grounds for an alternative view.

To get some notion of the placid agreement about economic insatiability, one need only look at several of the leading economics textbooks. From them we learn:

"People will never have their wants completely satisfied. There will always be more things, and new things, that people would like to have." (Theodore Morgan)

"Higher production levels always seem to bring in their train higher consumption standards." (Paul Samuelson)

"For more than a century we have appeared on the threshold of adequate nutrition, and yet, despite large advances in the per capita production of foodstuffs, the goal has not yet been reached . . . This indicates no failure of tech-

nical or economic organization, but only an expansion of man's desires." (George Stigler)

Now although textbooks may be far removed from the frontiers of a science, they nevertheless reflect the opinions most commonly shared and respected in the field.

Have economists always held the concept of insatiability in such unquestioned esteem? They did in the eighteenth century, the time when economics became a separate discipline. The Classical Economists of that era, viewing human nature as universal and immutable, held that some human wants would always remain unsatisfied, and that these have a natural tendency uncontrolled by judgment. As Adam Smith, the high priest of Classical Economics, wrote in his *Wealth of Nations*:

The desire of food is limited in every man by the narrow capacity of the stomach; but the desire of the conveniences and ornaments of building, dress, equipage, and household furniture, seems to have no certain limit or boundary.

It has been noted, by the way, that if Smith thought that beyond a certain point wealth had no utility, then the *Wealth of Nations* is a book that goes nowhere.

It was in the Classical economic doctrines that Karl Marx received his early training, and in his assumption of insatiability, Marx shared the Classical view. Thus he wrote (with Friedrich Engels) in *The German Ideology*: "... as soon as a need is satisfied . . . new needs are made".

The Neoclassical school of economists of the

nineteenth century in like manner regarded insatiability as a postulate. William Stanley Jevons, one of the founders of English Neoclassicism, observed that "the satisfaction of a lower want permits a higher want to manifest itself," and an Austrian Neoclassicist, Karl Menger, made the comprehensive point that economic goods—unlike free or non-economic goods—were precisely those for which the wants exceeded the supply. Gustav Cassel, an outstanding Swedish economist, wrote that "the wants of civilized humanity as a whole are insatiable". The final synthesis of Neoclassical economics was provided by Alfred Marshall, who held in his *Principles* (still the very heart of modern economics) that "the gratification of a want is merely a step to some new pursuit." Climbing one step, he believed, was no more than the means to climbing another step, and the unending flight of steps represented the infinite expansibility of wants.

Coming closer to our own time we find the Institutionalists—who believed that economics should emphasize the study of specific institutions in their specific cultural settings—also upholding the notion of insatiability. This is a surprising instance of confluence between the Institutionalists and the mainstream of economic thought. It is surprising because Thorstein Veblen and other members of the Institutionalist school were generally critical of traditional economic views and insisted that there could be no universal science of economics because there was no universal human nature. Yet Veblen observed, in *The Theory of Business Enterprise*:

... the supply of consumable goods is practically never greater than the community's capacity for consuming them. An embarrassing excess in any line is practically a remote contingency at the most. There are many eloquent passages in the economic manuals which may be called in witness of this truism, where much pains is taken [sic] to show that human wants are, in the nature of the case, indefinitely extensible.

Veblen is clearly right that these passages flourish in the literature of economics—I have cited only a few. But it does seem doubtful that untested testimony offered by a multitude of witnesses is adequate to establish the truth of any proposition.

Most contemporary economists, when they

pay any attention to it at all, are loyal to the tradition and accept the assumption of insatiability quite uncritically. Thus Kenneth Arrow has stated that economics is justified in "disregarding the existence of points of bliss," an engaging term that economists use for satiation; he alludes to—but does not actually introduce—empirical evidence to account for this disregard. And similarly, another distinguished economist, Tjalling C. Koopmans, notes:

It is also assumed that no saturation can be reached by a consumer within the limitation imposed by total available resources, by technological possibilities, and by provision for the survival of all others.

John Buttrick has made a distinctly helpful suggestion in commenting upon the whole matter:

It has long been recognized that if existing resources and technology are such that individuals are or easily may be 'saturated,' i.e., reach bliss, then the usefulness of conventional theory vanishes. Since economists *qua* economists are not concerned with a world in which they will be unemployed, and since people by-and-large are not now saturated, no one worries his head further about this.

As I have said, so far as I know neither economics itself nor any other discipline has tried to verify empirically the notion that man's wants are insatiable. Nevertheless, as we have seen, economists in varying ways continue to rely on it. How to explain the remarkable sturdiness and longevity of an untested assumption?

The matter might be explained, I think, by recognizing that a question of what *ought* to satiate seems to arise when one asks the question Is Satiation Possible? We must recognize that the modern economist is a double man, his two halves mutually exclusive. In the first place, he functions as a social scientist concerned with logically demonstrable premises or empirically observable facts. In the second, he is a man like any other, making value judgments even as you and I. In his professional capacity he scrupulously refuses to distinguish between "important" and "unimportant" goods; as an impartial observer he insists that he cannot validly make such distinctions, and he leaves these judgments to the individual consumer. He is, after all, a scientist. As a man he cannot help making such distinctly moral judgments, and this second, moralistic view of economic matters is deeply

rooted. Long before there was a science of economics, Epicurus said: "The wealth demanded by nature is both limited and easily procured; that demanded by idle imaginings stretches on to infinity." Adam Smith asserted that some wants are proper and natural (necessities) and some are unnatural and not essential for the support of life (luxuries)—nevertheless, wants in general are insatiable. Smith in fact noted that "with the greater part of rich people, the chief enjoyment of riches consists in the parade of riches"—an eighteenth-century version of the "conspicuous consumption" described by Veblen a hundred years later. It is precisely these "unnatural" desires that have usually been held to be insatiable.

The belief that some wants are natural and some unnatural was extended during the first half of the nineteenth century and further elaborated when Alfred Marshall differentiated between biological needs, natural wants, and artificial wants—without specifying the limits of each category. Marshall's outstanding disciple, John Maynard Keynes, maintained that the problem of scarcity is not a permanent problem because absolute needs are finite, and the only needs that are insatiable are those based on the desire to outdo the Joneses. Keynes wrote this twenty-five years ago in his *Essays on Persuasion*. Today Galbraith makes a similar point when he claims that insatiability actually depends on synthetic wants being created by means of conspicuous consumption and advertising. He takes a "moralistic" position on this issue by seeking to establish, in *The Affluent Society*, a relative scale of "importance" for goods. Like Galbraith, Tjalling C. Koopmans has asked: "What is the good of efficient utilization of resources to satisfy preferences created by advertising and propagated by competitive and conspicuous consumption?" Koopmans also appears to advocate ranking goods according to their importance rather than according to consumer demand. He would, for example, set little store by the consumer's decision that the new striped toothpaste is more "important" than the old-fashioned kind. Thus, from an admixture of common sense and moral value, the economist, speaking as moralist, may conclude that satisfaction of further wants becomes less important as the amount of satisfied wants in-

creases—particularly in the case of "unessential" goods. But a contemporary economist concludes this at the peril of his license as an impartial observer.

Can the other social sciences illuminate this question of insatiability which economics has largely overlooked or refused to recognize as problematic? Conceivably they can, but unfortunately few social scientists appear to have tried. A noted cultural anthropologist, Raymond Firth, has assented to the prevailing view in approving the self-restraint by which contemporary economic theory has kept its eye firmly on "the varied and expansible nature of human objectives of conduct—the multiplicity of ends." Both Wilbert E. Moore, a well-known industrial sociologist, and J. H. Boeke, a specialist in the economics of nonindustrialized societies, agree that pure economic theory rests on "the standard conception, the fundamental principle" that economic wants are random and limitless.

But observers of nonindustrial societies do not agree as readily among themselves on the insatiability of wants. Thus the same Boeke, in describing the economic life of Indonesia, holds that in such eastern societies needs are extremely limited, whereas in western societies, needs appear to be limitless, the means of attaining them always limited. On the other hand, J. C. Greaves, another investigator of the economic life of backward peoples, has written, "Not the rashest proponent of native insensibility . . . has said that given opportunity natives cannot spend money." Thus a nineteenth century traveler to the Maori of New Zealand was prompted to write, in accents reminiscent of Adam Smith:

Articles of European manufacture are now in continual request, together with lead, shot, balls, bullet molds, etc. A shirt requires the nether part of its wearer to be decently encased in trousers; the thighs thus safe from exposure kindle an affection on the part of the legs for a pair of stockings, whose soles would soon depart from the body unless remedied by boots and shoes . . . However simple the wants of the people may be, yet no sooner are they possessed of one article of European manufacture, the possession of it begets additional requisites.

Anthropologist Melville Herskovits concludes that the principles of scarcity and choice, which

give economics "its reason for being, rest psychologically on firm ground . . . Wants . . . apparently manifest a certain dynamic quality, which seems to derive from the inventiveness and receptivity of man, and are ultimately to be referred to the cumulative nature of human culture itself."

Moving out of the social sciences altogether, we find Nikita Khrushchev, the spokesman for the Soviet Union, quite on the side of the moralists when he proclaimed at the Twenty-first Communist Party Congress: "When we speak of satisfying the needs of the people, we have in mind not the whims and desires for luxuries but the healthy requirements of a culturally developed man." In commenting on this speech, *The New York Times* editorially gloated: "Khrushchev has discovered what the opponents of communism have long maintained: men's wants are insatiable and there never can be enough to give men all that they might want."

And indeed the economic behavior of Americans appears to confirm the notion that man's wants are insatiable. Every increase in production has been followed by consumers eager to buy. But the occasional contradictions of this hypothesis indicate that we cannot accept it unquestioningly. I am thinking of communitarian societies organized on ascetic principles; I am thinking, too, of those individuals (admittedly rare) who have gone against the trend. Among officials of major business enterprises, for example, some have refused bonuses for work performed. According to *The New York Times* of January 10, 1960, in a news story headed "Enough is Enough," George Romney, president of American Motors, declined a \$100,000 bonus from the company's record earnings; and John O. Ekblom, chairman of the Hupp Corporation, is reported to have told his directors that he was content with his salary of \$42,000; he refused a bonus of \$110,000, saying, "The total sum of \$152,000 far exceeds my needs and appetites." Thus, even in our acquisitive society we find men who are willing to concede that they are satiated.

We have seen that insatiability has been assumed in the absence of any empirical evidence for the assumption. Furthermore, it is common-

ly held that it is human nature to want more, and that therefore larger collections of goods are, and can be expected to be, chosen in preference to smaller collections. This view rests on a belief that while the law of diminishing marginal utility operates with respect to any individual good, it does not operate with respect to the total collection of goods.

But I think we must distinguish what is true at the moment for, say, American culture—the "affluent society" *par excellence*—where satiety has clearly *not* yet been attained, from the possibility that other societies might attain it. Take for example the law of diminishing marginal utility mentioned above. Economists acknowledge that this law applies to any one product—such as automobiles—so that the marginal utility of the third automobile to an individual is less than that of the second, until satiation is reached; at satiation, there is no "increment in utility" from an increase in automobiles owned. If the principle of diminishing marginal utility is valid for any one commodity, there is no logical reason why it is not valid for the whole range of commodities. Although one may believe that people will choose two units of utility to one, and three to two, it seems doubtful that this choice must continue indefinitely. Only if it could would we be able to say that "points of bliss" are unattainable.

Now suppose we revise the definitions of economics whenever they are based, however implicitly, on the idea that the reach must exceed the grasp. (This would, incidentally, put the economist out of business; as someone once said, there is no need for economists in heaven.) We do this by assuming that man's wants may be finite and satiable, rather than infinite and insatiable. Numbers of consequences follow from this position, but I shall pursue just one of them. If man's wants are basically satiable, we might find it less objectionable to redistribute and limit income. At present, one reason that economists oppose placing an absolute upper limit on the size of individual income is that they believe that every increase in an individual's consumption represents an increase in his utility level—the degree to which his wants are satisfied. This assumption in turn rests on the premise that the individual's utility level depends solely on his consumption and is

independent of the utility levels of others. Some economists, however, including the author, believe that beyond a certain level utility is comparative rather than absolute. In other words, beyond the point at which an individual's own needs are satisfied, his wants depend on "external effects in consumption"—the wants of others. Lionel Robbins has pointed out these external effects in *The Economic Problem in Peace and War*:

It is enough . . . to think of the emphasis Veblen laid on envy and emulation as factors determining demand; to observe the tide of fashion in women's clothing; or to imagine what would happen to any one man's desire for the telephone if all of his friends were permanently disconnected.

There is little doubt that the consumption of others has an influence on the utility level of an individual. If this is so, then bliss is attainable and happiness has a ceiling.

Now, following this line of thought, suppose we were able to determine some point at which consumption could be limited without at the same time limiting the satisfaction of the individual. How should we define this point of maximum satisfaction? Should we define it normatively, as do the few economists who distinguish between luxuries and necessities according to preconceived notions of what is "necessary," "unnecessary," "natural" and "artificial," or "important" and "unimportant"? No, I suggest that using these unsound classifications, we would have as many judgments as there were judges. Instead, I propose that we concentrate on classifying descriptively. A commodity would be defined as a necessity if the added utility it brings is a function of the individual's own utility level; a commodity would be classed as a luxury if its additional utility is a function of the utility level of other people. This would enable us to locate the point of maximum utility with an independent origin.

I have said that one consequence of assuming

that wants are finite would be to make possible the limiting of incomes without adversely affecting the utility level of an individual. Conversely, if incomes were indeed limited at the point of each individual's independent "maximum utility level," then we could get a fair test of the hypothesis that all wants are satiable. But such limitation of incomes is extremely unlikely in a society which behaves as though the individual is entitled to all the consumer goods he can legally obtain. We regard as exemplary the man who has more possessions and goad the one who has less. Also, deep within our society lies the drive to consume competitively. America has seen an almost endless flow of new consumer goods, and the rate of innovation is speeded by planned obsolescence (annual model change). Finally, the external stimulants of consumption, such as advertising, do indeed powerfully extend wants by heralding the material and psychic advantages, real and imaginary, of additional goods and services.

All these facts of our life prevent our wants from being satiated. But these are all cultural facts—bound by time and space—rather than universal *données*. The pace of change is itself a part of our culture, and very different from the pace—and the wants—of a slowly developing culture.

We must conclude, then, that one belief about human nature, upon which the study of economics rests, rests itself on no sufficient evidence. We must assume that while insatiability seems to characterize our present economic behavior, it might not characterize our society, or any other, if some cultural patterns were significantly altered.

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BEING WITH BERENSON

by **HERBERT L. JACOBSON**

Photograph by Karl Bissinger

Of all the hundreds of his friends who frequented Bernard Berenson's palace-museum-cum-library, "I Tatti," I was one of the least intellectual, possibly excepting some picture-owning millionaires. Indeed, in his calculated effort to shove behind him the days in which as an authenticator he had accumulated his fortune, Berenson no longer welcomed to his little realm near Florence collectors who were merely rich. I, on the other hand, had been a professional soldier, and, after the war, was the civilian manager of cold war radio stations in hot spots such as Trieste and Berlin, in a word, a "man of action," a figure which has always been the theoretical favorite of men of intellect since Socrates. But my relationship with Berenson, though necessarily intermittent due to my

wanderings, was more emotional than that because of the wartime conditions under which we first met and which he never forgot. It enabled me to see a side of him that few men were privileged to see.

What the literary critics call the "final, definitive evaluation" of this phenomenon of Nature, Art, and Intellect will have to be made by critics, and then, perhaps, remade by re-evaluators in generations to come. I have already had a chance to observe that the first obits, written in some cases by men who were his enemies and detractors in life, are of an extraordinary kindness. I foresee that in a little while the pendulum will swing back and they will again be calling him an overrated charlatan. The final judgment, I am confident, will place him perhaps higher in the history of our culture than anyone yet has done, not so much for his painstaking and brilliant scholarship in art as for his unrepentant humanism at a time when blind or fearful intellectuals were falling rapidly into the worship of dark and bloody gods.

Berenson was, however, of a Rinascentimental many-sidedness that makes a true evaluation difficult, especially so soon after his death. First, the last mask, that of feudal *Signore* of "I Tatti," will have to be peeled away. It was a beautifully performed comedy, which delighted him and all around him; which had an aesthetic value not to be despised in itself, like the archaic rites of Stonehenge; but which obscured rather than illuminated the mind of the man.

My first presentation at court was when we took Florence. Loaded down with cigarettes and chocolate, and armed to the teeth (Florence was the only city in Italy in which Fascist *franc-tireurs* caused any considerable damage after it was liberated), I galloped to "I Tatti" on my trusty jeep. The old man was visibly moved at the sight of an American uniform, but my reception was as formal as it was to be in peacetime for the next fifteen years. I was met at the door by a silent butler, the only silent butler I have ever encountered in Italy. Aforesaid butler deposited my wet greatcoat on a wardrobe chest where it couldn't possibly have dried. (I always wondered why, for that steady stream of pilgrims, they didn't get a clothes-tree or coat closet, but came to the conclusion that it would have been out of style with the Renaissance

decorations). Having checked my gat at the door, I was conducted into the living room, where a fire was crackling, and I was left alone just long enough to have my breath taken away by the beauty of the paintings hung around with measured casualness. Then, billowing in, came Nicky Mariano, Berenson's social secretary, devoted companion, and the librarian of his 50,000-volume collection.

Nicky is a large, rosy Neapolitan beauty whose floridity and heartiness perfectly complemented Berenson's own deceptive delicacy of appearance and studied restraint. In manner, she is of a gentility and sweetness that belongs to an older world. We all loved her and considered the Master lucky to have such a delicious amanuensis.

I had long suspected, by the way, looking at Berenson, that he must have owed his early success, when in Boston he was putting together the collection of the millionairess Isabella Gardner, to his sheer physical beauty. But the recent sight of a photograph of him in that period changed my mind and gave me instead another clue to his character. For it revealed him as almost the opposite of the man I knew in old age: a young, dishevelled, longhaired lad who may have appealed to women because of an intensely passionate, though disorderly, nature, but not because of his dapper beauty.

Then, as on subsequent visits, Nicky described to me, briefly but pointedly, the other guests who would be arriving—as the junior and a punctual American I would usually be the first, even when it meant driving through walls of mud from the front at Futa Pass—and the others would come in on tip-toe and talking, if at all, in hushed tones, as if in a funeral parlor.

New guests were taken around the villa by Nicky and shown the many art treasures carefully arranged not to give the impression of a museum. I remember one such occasion when, after identifying one picture as the work of a certain Renaissance painter, she suddenly recalled that the Master had changed his own attribution of it recently, and I trembled for all the American millionaires across the Atlantic with their costly paintings safely ensconced beyond certified Berenson attributions.

(I was told once by one of Berenson's younger rivals, Cesari Brandi, how amused he was in

the course of a pre-war visit to America to be shown in some of our stately homes enormous full-blown Titians—covering whole boudoir walls—not a square inch of which could possibly have been painted by anyone else, alongside which, in a gold frame, would be hung a Berenson authentication.)

Then we would all return and huddle round the fireplace making desultory conversation while we kept our eyes fixed on the lone door through which He must enter. But fix as we might in the dim light—the séances were usually at the high tea hour, though occasionally there was an *intime* luncheon—we could never spot the exact moment he passed the threshold. Suddenly there was a rustle as of a sparrow taking off, a few quick steps of small feet in freshly polished shoes, and he was among us, holding out his long, beautiful fingers and looking at us quizzically to see what the day had brought. Thinking now of his hands, second only to Eleonora Duse's in occult reputation, I can understand how he came to develop a "tactile" theory of painting; he must have thought through his fingertips.

He was a small man—I only realized how small as I stood by his coffin, scarcely bigger than a child's—but so well proportioned that he left no such impression. His head tapered finely down a delicately aquiline nose to the tiny white Van Dyke under the full, arched lips, these the only spot of color in his marble face, and bluish at that in his old age. He always looked as if he had just stepped fresh from the hands of a valet, and indeed he usually had. His Edwardian elegance was always set off by a fresh flower in his buttonhole.

When I met him he was a mere 79 and already diaphanous. I was to know him as a very old man for another fifteen years, but after our first walk I never again judged his physique by appearances. I was half a century younger than he and, when we met, in the physical trim of an Army officer on active service. Yet it was fatiguing to me to keep up with him as he sprinted along garden paths, casually leaping across ditches like a mountain goat. At the end of the walk he posed for me for a photograph against the background of a double row of Tuscan cypress trees on his property, leaning back casually on his purely decorative cane,

his hat tilted jauntily over one eye, a "for posterity" glare in the uncovered eagle orb. I wish I had that picture now, but it was lost when I was flown home wounded.

His conversational manner was Socratic, a series of questions leading to a carefully prepared conclusion almost always opposed to the original position stated by his interlocutor—I almost said a "trap." But his victims were most willing, excepting those one or two occasions when he stung too deeply, at which point Nicky would intervene to smooth things over, changing the subject to something homely, like the state of one's family. Yet although Berenson obviously enjoyed the demolition, after watching his performance a few times I realized that he was not really malicious at all, that for him it was chiefly an intellectual exercise—at worst a pricking of over-inflated egos, hardly ever an argument *ad hominem*.

His visitors were almost all (I'd except myself) distinguished, starting with King Gustav of Sweden, who was almost every post-war year his houseguest for weeks, wearing the old man out with the incessant, Teutonic thoroughness of his questions about the Etruscans—Gustav's favorite pursuit—as if he wanted to get everything possible out of that tightly stuffed brain before it evanesced. (Even now, as I write this the day after his funeral, the thing that angers me most about his loss is that it has cut off, as casually as you'd switch off a room light, all the information accumulated in a century of study and all the combinations of that information that a Berenson could bring up to shame the most elaborate electronic thinking machine that will ever be invented.) When His Majesty was in residence at "I Tatti" only visitors of eminence were welcome. Once, though, I bumped into the King accidentally. I had unpardonably shown up unannounced because I was in a great hurry between trains. Having slipped past the speechless butler, I found myself alone in the salon with a tall, gangling man in tweeds, whose white-blond hair was parted in the middle and who wore scholarly specs. He was seated and poring over a book. I recognized him at once and hesitated, thinking how best I might backtrack inconspicuously. But before I could make a move, he rose and came toward me, holding out

his hand and saying: "My name is Bernadotte." "Ah, yes," I replied, "the famous archaeologist," but when I took his hand I bowed over it and clicked my heels slightly, as I had learned to do in Germany after the war. Then I mumbled something about having to catch a train for Rome; asked him kindly to present my respects to the Master of the house; and got the hell out before Nicky could put me out.

Gustav's attentiveness apparently paid, because just the day before Berenson died, the King announced a magnificent strike near Rome; but the old man was too far gone to appreciate the news. The King was the first to be informed of Berenson's death. All the usual local dignitaries came to pay their respects: the Mayor, the Prefect, the Bishop, the District Commander of the *carabinieri*. But of Berenson's "friends," who, when he was alive, stormed the gates of "I Tatti" to be able to say they had taken tea with him, few—very, very few—showed up.

Berenson expected each of his guests to play a role just as he did, and when someone refused to fit he was quickly called to order. I once watched him reduce almost to tears a British Commanding General who had pretensions to being a connoisseur of Egyptian art. The butler should have told the general, as he readjusted his medals before leading him in, that the role he had been cast for that evening was *miles gloriosus*, and nothing more.

Women, he expected to be feminine, and he took an excruciating delight in deflating the pretensions to intellectuality of contemporary suffragettes. I shall never forget the stage entrance of the Negro dancer Katherine Dunham, flaunting, not her magnificent body, but her Ph.D. in anthropology. After she had made a few false starts at social analysis, which he quickly squelched as arrant nonsense, she was smart enough to realize what the old boy expected of her, and curled up into a ball on the divan next to him as only a trained contortionist could, and purred while he stroked her knee—not avuncularly.

Yet almost any amount of playing the clown was worth it to listen to the splendid talk that fell from those curved lips. There are few injustices in this unjust world greater than the

publication of the aphorisms of a first-rate mind feebly recollected by a second-rate one with a third-rate pen; so I shall not try to reproduce any of them. I shall only say that their effect was like that of works of art, insofar as they illuminated whole sectors of experience. The best comparison I can think of is with a sonnet, with all its concentrated, melodic beauty and then the final wisdom. Berenson knew how precious these moments were, and after he had brought one off, he would pause to enjoy the effect on his audience.

Then, having made his score, he would rise, shake dumbly proffered hands swiftly, and get out of the salon as mysteriously as he had entered it, leaving to Nicky the summing up of the seance and the slow farewells. No matter what kind of an emotional shambles he had left behind, she never let anyone leave unhappy, a service not always easy, but never beyond the range of her exquisite tact.

On a very few occasions I had a chance to speak with Berenson alone. Shortly after we had first met, he drew me aside into a window recess to ask if I had read the first volume of Santayana's memoirs, in which that other tough old bird had spoken of Berenson exploiting the Renaissance instead of loving it. I had read it and was, this time, quick-witted enough both to acknowledge that I had and to give my distinguished cross-examiner to understand that Santayana's comment had made no impression on me, which was just the right note under the circumstances. On another occasion I conveyed to him the respects of the young *doyen* of American intellectuals, Jacques Barzun. When I took the occasion to recommend Barzun's *Romanticism and the Modern Ego* and *Darwin, Marx, Wagner* as central to the understanding of important contemporary intellectual movements, Berenson replied that he was no longer interested in reading about ideas. "I have had all the ideas myself," he stated as a matter of fact, with no air of boasting. "Now I want contact only with facts." It sounded, at first, like a strangely anti-intellectual position. But on reflection, I realized that it was not so, that Berenson, in common with many thinkers, simply needed facts out of which to construct or verify his intellectual hypotheses.

Indeed, while he himself sometimes tried to

play down his sheer technical, almost physical, skill in attributing paintings, I think this constant contact with the physical kept his agile mind from slipping off into clouds of irrelevant intellectualizing. Of his two great masters, William James the pragmatist and Walter Pater the aesthete, it was the American who triumphed in the end, although superficially Berenson's way of life seemed the execution of the Englishman's testament of beauty.

It was the play of Berenson's mind that enthralled us all, but what was almost equally impressive was the encyclopedic amount of relevant information he had accumulated in a century and the ease with which he drew up sustenance and refreshment from this well of knowledge. Although he had very definite, if somewhat conventional, ideas about politics, it bored him to listen to anyone else expatiate on the subject, and he would swiftly maneuver the conversation to a less worn track. I recall someone mentioning Léon Blum, the pre-war French Socialist Premier, and being peremptorily informed that Blum had been much more important and useful as a theater critic than as a politician, as well as being the author of one of the most enlightened books on marriage ever written.

With a man as old as Berenson, who was born, when one came to think of it, in the last year of the Civil War, one could never be quite sure that he hadn't personally known the great nineteenth-century figures he spoke about so intimately, and received from their lips the true interpretation of their texts. (He *had* known Wilde, but Shaw had refused to receive him.) In disagreeing with Berenson, one confronted the same frustration Paul must have felt in his discussions with Peter, who had gotten it straight from the lips of the Lord.

I started out this memoir by saying that I knew a sentimental side of Berenson that others did not get to see, and yet I have painted a very unsentimental portrait so far (though a psychologist might expect a hypersensitive softness beneath the glittering defensive mask). It was after I had become an almost regular weekly visitor from the wrong side of the Gothic line during the war that the incident occurred which showed me that this thinking machine was also a man of feeling. I was to go on a mission which,

under the best of circumstances, would mean at least a fortnight's absence, and did not want the old man to think I had become a casualty meanwhile. So I told him, as discreetly as I could in the presence of half a dozen people, not to expect me back for a few weeks. I had underestimated the electronic rapidity with which his lines connected. "Are you going on a mission?" he asked immediately. Hanging my head in shame that I, a trained intelligence officer, had betrayed my secret so quickly, I replied that I was, but that he shouldn't worry, that it wasn't really a dangerous mission (as it proved not to be). "Come here," he commanded from his perch on the divan.

I approached him hesitantly, not knowing quite why he wanted me nearer. As I came up against his knees he beckoned me to bend down. I then thought that perhaps he wanted to whisper something in my ear. But as I bent lower he took my shoulder and pushed me further down until I was on one knee as if before my liege lord. This, I thought, is it. Up to then he had never said an unkind word to the timid soldier who had come to him laden with cigarettes and chocolates, and with his rifle at the ready in case he needed succour. Now my turn had come and he was making a mockery of my mock heroics in front of all those people. I lowered my eyelids, afraid to look up at the sardonic smile I knew must be playing around his actor's lips. But the position was uncomfortable and my curiosity was greater than my embarrassment. So I raised my body and my eyes for a quick look. What I saw astonished and shamed me, for in his eyes were tears, and the hand upon my bowed shoulder had been his silent, if not quite inconspicuous, way of giving me his patriarchal blessing.

So as he lay there helpless beneath the magnificent Sienese cross, finally unable to have the last word, I gave him back his blessing. *Non sum dignus*, but, as Luther said, under very different circumstances: God help me, I could no other.



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The Augury

by DANIEL G. HOFFMAN

The day my mother came to term
The April air was pure,
Tall dark towers fenced her white bed,
Skylights were barred and dour.

The night my mother got her lamb
There was no moon at all
But a rammed hot rending of her loins
And a babe's red caterwaul

Who fell from darkness into light,
From warmth to time and cold
Bawling for breasts, insatiate,
Already wrinkled-old.

The midwife fingered the still warm caul
In her wishbone-knuckled hands.
In disused mumbles she unspelled
What life such birth portends.

'He shall dance to the serpent's song
As he seeks the dove's dark bower,
And assay to trace Jerusalem
In the crumbs of Babel's tower;

'What gold is his a collar is,
On kennel straw-lain the chain;
What hunger's his a banquet is
Served from his Father's throne.'

My father raged that a witless crone
Should rant old folly for alms
And turned her out ere she was done;
Scant silver crossed her palm.

What hungers I've since had to taste
Had all the taste of woe,
What wealth into my hands has passed
Buys joys that still seem true,

But still the bird that builds above
The city of my sleep
Broods on a nest of straws. I move
Half-waking, through a rubbled keep.

Daniel G. Hoffman holds three degrees from Columbia University and teaches English at Swarthmore College. "The Augury" appears in a book of his poetry, A Little Geste and Other Poems, published by Oxford University Press this fall. His other books include The Poetry of Stephen Crane and An Armada of Thirty Whales.

I've Been Reading

A Young Person's Guide to Improving Books & Edifying Examples

by ERIK WENSBERG

There are at least two ways to "explain" someone else's taste: on grounds of his profession and on grounds of his age. Neither way is adequate, of course, but both raise interesting questions. *Imprimis*, I might consider the reading that I do in my capacity as an editor. But to join those who have written in this space about what and how they have been reading and to speak of "professional" reading, to walk on discoursing calmly about *reading*—for a magazine editor to do this is rather as though Hamlet were to be given a new scene in Act V in which he must deliver a few poised remarks about national affairs and a few jolly anecdotes about palace life. He would dissolve on the spot into Richard II, sit upon the ground, and tell not sad but quite inconsolable stories.

For an editor tries to read everything, and chaos is the result. Quite aside from manuscripts, he has to be, as we say, "up on things." But the case is different when the editor is, in the quaint old phrase, a young person, for a young person is still reading at least some books for entirely personal reasons. That habit may divide an already shattered attention just once more, but of course it is to these "personal" books that he gives most of himself, not only because he can choose them without a hint of duty in the choice, but also because they are the ones that may re-

prieve even duty from becoming mere drudgery. Is this escapism? No, not altogether.

For instance, a friend of mine has for some time been taxing me for not reading novels anymore. And surely novels are supposed to be, among other things, escapist: the opium of the Western bourgeois, the time-honored remedy for tedium. They divert the tired businessman even as they made a New Woman of Emma Bovary. Yet few contemporary novels seem to "work" on me, and the reason may—who knows?—have partly to do with my profession and partly to do with my age. Professionally speaking, I know that most contemporary novels give me nothing much in the way of useful Facts. Some time ago in this space, Mr. Norman Podhoretz distinguished between novels whose useful Facts interested him and Great Novels that he hadn't so far been able to like on any account. The reading he did do was hardly escapist, but he was rebuked by a number of chaste literary people all the same—only, I think, because they did not see that he was taking it for granted that one uses books for the bracing, bending, or healing of the moral-aesthetic sense quite as much as for anything else. He simply was not finding many books that did that, and he said so.

I have recently gotten off the hook with my own reproving friend by reading four novels in a row, and one other book that is far harder to describe. I recommend them all to Mr. Podhoretz. They gave me exactly what I needed and wanted. Perhaps it was because—it must be typical of editors—they did seem to me unquestionably *about* Facts. And the *way* they were about Facts tells me why I don't read many contemporary novels.

An editor reads everything, including reviews, and of all the remarks I have read about Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, I have seen none that said these four books were hard-headed. Quite the reverse. They have recalled Ouida to one reviewer, Norman Douglas and (save the mark) Anais Nin to another, and Conrad to several. Of this wondrously uncongenial group, only Conrad comes close to being relevant to the point I would make about the *Quartet*. At least Conrad's *Lord Jim* expresses the same concern for Facts that so delights me in Durrell's books.

It is a concern that, perhaps more than any other virtue, is likely to be misconstrued by that admired modern type, the sophisticate. By that term I mean the man or woman "in the know," the one who is always at ease in minimizing a subject, who is knowing and tolerant of folly—if amused—and who has one passion left: a passion for his own poise. Plentiful of darts, he is without a quiver.

Mr. Durrell's concern for Facts is most likely, as I said, to be misconstrued by the sophisticate. And it has been. The reviewer for the careful *New Yorker* was so grudgingly transfixed by the ingenuity of the *Quartet's* form that she led me through five columns of type without ever once hinting at the quality which that form conveys or the idea that must surely require it. That quality (after all, it was the *New Yorker*) is wonder; and that wonder is produced by skepticism. But not, certainly, the skepticism of the modern sophisticate. Let me explain what I mean in a moment.

By now I should have thought the whole world knew what Mr. Durrell's ingenious literary invention was. (It was also invented by Ford Madox Ford and Ryūnosuke Akutagawa, among others.) Here are four books about the same group of people (and events) in pre-war, war-time, and post-war Alexandria, some in love with others, some not or only seeming to be, all related in a sociable way: one a spectacularly beautiful woman, one a financier, one a schoolteacher, one an author, one a doctor, and so forth. The first book, *Justine*, is largely about the love affair between the beautiful woman (who is married to the financier) and the schoolteacher and how really perilous the affair seems to be in its effects on her, on the husband, and on the mistress. The second, *Balthazar*, is a retelling of this story as the doctor lets the schoolteacher know some of what the schoolteacher didn't know when he wrote the book about the love affair, that book being *Justine*. The third, *Mountolive*, is a book neither written by nor interfered with by any of the people figuring in its story; it goes both behind the first book in time and beyond it as well, telling a largely new story about events merely mentioned in the first two; it also explains that the love affair in the first book was something quite different from what it seemed, and quite as interesting, and it

introduces at least two wholly new characters, a diplomat and the patrician mother of the financier. The last, *Clea*, is a kind of coda, in which the schoolteacher, once again telling the story, returns to Alexandria after a sojourn away, has a new love affair, and satisfies himself that there is nothing more he can or need know about the events that have been described in the first three books.

There. But then I dare say my readers knew that much already. Mr. Durrell's idea is one every editor or journalist or scientist—or artist—has believed in: that no one knows the whole truth about anything, that appearance is a Fact like any other, and that one can't get the same appearance from one angle of vision as from another. This is what I mean by skepticism. And this, stated baldly, is a very dull idea, as most literary ideas are.

Those readers who could not get over the first effect of this idea, that effect being the *Quartet's* form, or who believe it to be "fakery" or "fraud" (as two terribly knowing people have called it to me) are out of reach of the remarks that follow, and I may as well forget them. But at least one reviewer, the novelist George P. Elliott, has called the *Quartet* "romantic," and his response is close enough to my own to meet halfway.

Mr. Elliott said in effect that the *Quartet* is romantic because "the characters are wild and tormented and dingy," "beautiful, seductive and intelligent," "humbled and half-maddened"; he speaks with an almost audible relish of "shameless riches, the destitution of abject disease" and of "bitter poverty . . . vice, perversion, injustices, delicacies of relationship . . . exiles . . . the sea, the desert, a city that remembers Cleopatra." All this is in the books, of course, but by itself it was exactly what kept me away from them for months; the newspaper reviewers made them sound like Vilma Banky put into modern dress and drenched in dollops of "local color."

Now I remember Cleopatra just as Mr. Elliott likes to, but I would call the books "romantic" for a quite different reason. They are inclusive, and they are reverential.

The Romanticists of the nineteenth century will demonstrate what I mean by inclusiveness. One need only take apart a Keats poem for the authentic Virgil and Shakespeare in it, or a

composition by Berlioz for the Gluck and the Bach (and the Shakespeare) in it; the novels of Balzac for the authentic Science, the Sociology, the Mythology, the Politics, the Euripides in them; Victor Hugo for the History, the Music, the Poetry, the Sociology, the Necromancy—the whole phenomenal world.

I do not mean that one can learn a vast amount of veritable, useful Fact about history or costume or class structure or "the relative social mobility of minor ethnic or socio-economic groups" among Mr. Durrell's Alexandrians. Not at all. To be sure, one can learn a very good deal that is perfectly useless but quite enthralling about Arabian carnivals, dervishes, various kinds of prostitution, night fishing-parties and duck shoots, circumcision rites, the Coptic tradition, and—yes—homunculi. Am I only restating Mr. Elliott's enthusiasm in a different way? No, I am not. For while I share it, I want more than he does. I am not a "fan" of A. E. Coppard or John Collier or even of Poe; nothing bores me like little, mincing servings of the simply unlikely, the suspenseful, or the merely revolting. But such *generous*, random, gratuitous, whimsical, expertly flourished, great *nets-full* of remarkable things as Mr. Durrell has trapped in these four slim volumes! And as for "ideas"—one either sees some truth in the grim comments on the modern spirit made by the character Pursewarden or one doesn't; nevertheless, they are there, at great length, and I happen to.

But larger than these, and encompassing them, are the implied meanings of the whole *Quartet*. In it, scepticism has led to reverence, to wonder. I very much like what these books are intended to teach: the notion that a willing, open eye, ready to believe, though not for advantage or out of bitter necessity, will see more wonders in this world—in just one city—than can be told otherwise than by art. In short, these books include dinner parties, and friendship, and mornings at the barbershop, as well as scrying and international conspiracy. And, if it is possible to wring literal meaning from the phrase, Durrell's heart is in all of them.

Mr. Elliott also said that he had not supposed there was so much romance left in any city as Durrell finds in Alexandria; and again I wonder if it is romance or simply camels and absinthe that he is looking for. There is another romance

that is romantic (i.e. inclusive) about the mental as well as the visible Fact, that I would urge on him, that I urge on anyone: Paul Goodman's extraordinary book *The Empire City*. It is about a romantic locale called New York.

If the absolutely photographic, scientific, socio-economico-historic "truth" of Mr. Durrell's Facts seems to me beside the point—and it does—a wholly different set of Facts, as he deals with them, do not. These are facts about what, for lack of another phrase, we must call the beauty in the human spirit. I really do not care whether Mr. Durrell's characters are "realized" or "dense" in one reviewer's words, or "flat" or "round" in the old distinction of E. M. Forster. Most of them are, as Lionel Trilling once said of one of Forster's own characters, "fragrant." And if that is an intolerably unserious or inexact term, I will just have to say they are "luminous." And again I must make a conjecture about the author's intention that I am only certain of as an effect: in his form (telling and retelling and retelling the same story), in his manner of observing these characters in their physicality and voice and bearing, Mr. Durrell convinces me that they are just as real as anyone need be; better—anyone can be real in quite the same way, if I could but see them so myself.

In fact, these books—and the next one I want to speak of—convey to me a very rare sort of conviction: that all people are as vividly real as oneself. And this conviction is expressed not by psychologizing and the other sorts of peering, "sophisticated," modern intimacy, but rather by the author's maintaining a distance from his characters. One is reminded what the old phrase "aesthetic distance" means. In a democratic age, in which we all—including editors and young persons—have to do with far too many people, such wise discretion in art is tonic and, to me, instructive. "Democracy," says a character in Henry Adams' novel, "has ruined my nerves."

Has the critical editor been vanquished by the excitable young person? I do not think so, though my notion of "maturity" may be eccentric. But I do recommend these books especially to those young persons who think the world their knowing elders have made is too frequently frozen and freezing, too narrowing and conducive to smugness, and to those who may occasionally feel

they have been miseducated by knowingness. And to editors like myself, who like to think they know the dimensions of Facts.

"If I could do it, I'd do no writing here at all. It would be photographs; the rest would be fragments of cloth, bits of cotton, lumps of earth, records of speech, pieces of wood and iron, phials of odors, plates of food and excrement. Booksellers would consider it quite a novelty; critics would murmur, yes, but is it art; and I could trust a majority of you to use it as you would a parlor game.

"A piece of the body torn out by the roots might be more to the point."

That quotation is from my fifth book and is also about writing the Facts. Though I compose this just ahead of the book's publication date, and with a feeling of urgency and impatience that the book *be* published, I hardly think any words of mine will be needed to enhance the certain success of James Agee and Walker Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. To be sure, the work was a spectacular failure when it was first published in 1941. (I worry, by the way—an editor worries—about other editors who could do nothing about that failure.) But even this early the air is full of memoirs of the late James Agee, or so it seems; and my evenings seem full of his former friends, telling how the young genius spent himself and his talents in bad personal habits, bad working habits, inferior forms. One can hardly contradict, never having known him. One can only wonder what was spent in care, in furious energy, in force of will, on this one astonishing book. And what can have been the effect on Agee of the book's total commercial and critical failure? No one who knows what writing feels like could call that question pious or irrelevant; yet all I hear of James Agee are anecdotes of the clucking sort. We are pious about Artists, but very knowing about our friends.

That is not how I would describe Walker Evans' introductory memoir in this new edition. Here is friendship's discretion itself, describing Agee in 1936, the time the two young men went to Alabama to live with and describe and photograph three families of tenant farmers. In this new edition, as in the old one, Evans' deep, patient and sturdy photographs open a book that

will, I suppose, nevertheless remain Agee's. There are more of these photographs now, and that is a boon. Like the text, they have nothing whatever to do with the melodramatic and morally self-serving proletarian art that was still in vogue in New York in 1936. A young person who has heard as much as some of us have about that era will be struck by the fatal likelihood that this personal statement about poverty and the oppression of laborers would no more have interested the political zealots than the goodly burghers—who did not buy the book either.

Dwight Macdonald has written the most detailed account of the book's brief first life in his *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. His article, which I have just reread, reminds an editor that publication of the posthumous *A Death in the Family* and the succeeding publication of two volumes of Agee's work on the movies established the beginning of a reputation for a new publishing house a few years ago. The too-long-delayed reissue of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by Houghton Mifflin will, I think, bring a large sale and will begin to earn Agee the important place he deserves in American literature.

I think the young might make this book's success by themselves, for it bears many of the marks of the quite genuine rebellion they seem to have been engaged in over the last four years. One can only be glib in indicating the campaigns of that rebellion, but to my mind they are: the Beat movement, both in its attempts at art and in its practiced social ideas; the wholesale interest in art not only by the Beat but by the merely malleable; the sit-ins in the South and the marching in their behalf in the North; the renewed interest in liberal politics that everyone senses in the universities—even the passive reluctance that I observe in the waves of young Americans going abroad, a reluctance to settle for the tight jobs and the genteel society available to them at home. (They will not serve who only travel and wait.) What they all find in America at the moment is a deficiency of mind in our government, of fervor in our bureaucracy and of *la joie* in our social arrangements. If youth is liberal by nature, it is this natural liberality that has been affronted.


Here, then, is a book that fairly storms with the liberal emotions but that explicitly defies every "official" expression of them: journalism,

social science, all of the so-called "disciplines," even art itself. It likewise explodes every traditional form, throwing up epigraphs, introductions, "notes" and "appendices" that are only more epigraphs and invocations; "footnotes," a preface, a whimsical cast of *personae*, lists, biblical quotations, original poems, the debris of a veritable hurricane of humanist feeling—all to make the reader believe, with barely tolerable vividness, the absolute *realness* of these tenant farmers and their manner of life. If this does not engage the young people who protest in one way or another the national torpor, including the Southern scandal, I am much mistaken.

And if Agee's prose, with its surging cadence, its unflagging passion, its unembarrassed "childishness" and appeal to innocence does not teach the perfervid Beat writers how it is done, nothing will. From him they could learn the deficiency of the energy for which a few of them have been praised: the deficiency of mental energy that scorns precision. For at all times one knows what Agee is talking about. The text is one of the few "photographic" literary works in American literature since Hawthorne, who

also, so to speak, wrote pictures. Agee's book tells us far less of the psychology, the motives, the exact feelings of these people than it tells us the detail of their faces, their bodies, their clothes, their homes, animals, gardens, belongings. It would require another essay to explore the first things about this prose. Suffice to say that I think the effect of such verbal photography of externals is rather like the effect of contemplating the belongings of someone with whom one is in love: their reality unfolds and unfolds and love increases.

At least one seasoned critic has already said that Agee's work in this book should have been more closely edited, that "discriminating cuts would have enormously improved it." As an editor, I deny it. He has also said, in qualifying his praise, that this is "a young man's book" and so, in places, "exasperating." As a young person as well as an editor, I would answer with a friendly silence.

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Campaign Footnote:

... It is a mistake to think of Conservatives and Liberals [in the 1880's in England] as significantly different from each other. Both consisted of three kinds of members: a small group of stand-patters, a large group of supporters of mild changes, and a small group of advanced reformers. Conservative and Liberal standpatters, Conservative and Liberal moderates, and advanced Conservatives and Liberals had more in common with each other than they had with other members of their own party . . . This confusion of parties enraged people like Herbert Spencer who wanted their political distinctions neat and clear . . . (Herman Ausubel, in *IN HARD TIMES: REFORMERS AMONG THE LATE VICTORIANS*, published by Columbia University Press, 1960.)

BEFORE THE HOUSE

THE END OF SLAVERY?

DAVID CORT

"The world," they say, paraphrasing Lincoln's more localized prediction, "cannot endure half-slave and half-free." Since freedom has remained for most of human history a rare and dearly-bought prize, defended man by man and generation by generation, this lovely proposition, glibly spoken by our own statesmen and publicists, may herald either utopia or another long night. It is especially ripe for cross-examination at the present moment.

Given the great flexibility of the words "free" and "slave" and also "endure," we can take the proposition as simply sloganeering to the end of giving "freedom," in any definition, to a people before Moscow gives them Communist masters. The West's idea of freedom is negative, on the assumption that the freed people will then invent their own positives. If they cannot think of any successful positives, Moscow is loaded with them and will magnanimously replace one slavery with another. The West is more demure.

The "freeing" of Black Africa (the part of Africa south of the Sahara) in this context seems to me an absent-minded enormity that cannot now be reversed. The status of "slave" has been abolished, but in a world still full of masters. The West has reversed 500 years of Western history, while Russia gladly accepts custodianship of the old tradition. Black Africa is thrown like a broken toy on the scrap-heap for anybody to pick up. One gets the im-

pression that it has been judged worthless by the masters of the West. And the people of the West must have begun to wonder what exactly their governments think they are doing. Most baffled of all must be the Belgian ladies who were gang-raped in an oddly friendly way by Congolese soldiers who were asking the ladies' officer husbands not to desert the Congo. A sympathetic defense of the rapists was actually heard on an American radio discussion program, though late at night.

Lunacies of this sort have to have an historic explanation. In this case it is that the United States is the paramount power in the free world, and gives the signals, knowingly or unknowingly. Since 1917 the United States has had a blinkered commitment to the magic phrase "self-determination of peoples," while avoiding any commitments to them, once self-determined. Of about 100 million people self-determined after World War I, a little over 3 million actually voted to be so in plebiscites; riots proved a more effective means to that end. Is it very radical to say that this American policy invited the rise of Hitler and World War II, and might easily do as much for World War III? The "freedom" given the Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Finns, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Transylvanians, etc., was that of a child thrown into deep water by a father who walks away quickly. The inevitable "rescue" of these waifs was begun by Hitler and finished, with some failures, by Stalin. The "rescue" of China and Southeast Asia was begun by the United States, and has had much the same finish.

This American blueprint for freedom is not new. A century earlier, the United States had guaranteed a similar irresponsible freedom to the Latin-American regimes, whose rescuers since then have been largely indigenous, in conformity with the guarantee. The specific fragmentations into sovereign states had very little point except for Portuguese Brazil and, of course, most island republics; for example, so little was known or cared about the Incan Empire that it was split half a dozen ways; the Mayans ended up in both Mexico and Guatemala; large empty areas are still in meaningless dispute. These creations could as easily have been united as frag-

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mented still further, as Panama was detached from Colombia. Several have Indian majorities nearly as "submerged" as anybody in Africa. Several, as in Haiti and Cuba currently, are ripe for class and race wars.

Events in Asia and Africa strikingly repeat this old history, under the same remote, disinterested, faintly troubled blessing and best wishes of the American Republic.

Further, the United States now blesses the birth of new sovereignties which slam their doors on the rest of the free world and at a time when migration is again on the increase; that is, we seem to disapprove of any more migration and development. Most Americans will deny that their own pioneers won a victory for (Communist word) "colonialism," or "imperialism." They were instead champions of exactly that eternal and blessed hope of man, migration and development. But the indigenes, we now seem to say, own the property, even if they cannot use it or defend it. This sort of property has been regarded by the chancellories for a long time as a "vacuum," invariably open to trouble.

The current policy is supported, of course, by a literature. For example, in the *Saturday Review* recently one could read about South Africa, which has 10,000,000 Negroes and about 3,500,000 Whites, 60 per cent of the latter unfortunately Afrikaaners, Hitler's former friends. The article said: "The cosmos does not permit proud, coarse, nasty little sadists forever to torture, enslave and starve helpless men, women and children. A mountainous debt of rage is accumulated, and it gets paid off in an explosion which wipes the tormentors off the face of the earth . . . When will the blood bath come?" The author, a white man, further elaborated the call to blood in his book, *The Death of Africa*. One must be as dismayed as if a Negro had counseled the massacre of troublesome Negroes. Have we so soon forgotten that this solution was Hitler's for the Jews; and that these solutions must be paid for?

"Black Africa for the blacks," is the slogan here. One remembers "Germany for the Aryans," "America for White Protestants," "Palestine for Arabs," "India for Hindus," all accompanied by more or less bloodshed, rape and rapine. Not even the groggiest liberal can dare to abhor the principle in one case, and adore it in another. If Black Africa must be exclusively for blacks, all national doors may properly slam shut. But the world is not going in that direction. Africa cannot be an exception; it cannot turn into a human zoo, a feral preserve for the law of the jungle.

Black African society is much more primitive than were those of the Aztecs and Incas when the conquistadors arrived. The Congo tribes differ materially in talents. The tribes around Leopoldville are considered by many observers a degenerate race. The Luba-Lunda group of Katanga had a well-defined empire. The most advanced are generally plains-dwellers showing some Arab influence. The tribes to the northeast were overrunning the country when the Belgians arrived to stop them. A Western-style politician, even though black, soon appears to all these people not very different from the former white rulers. In Nigeria, the conflict is still more outlandish, for

a medieval society with turreted castles flourishes in the north. In Uganda are the Bantu aristocrats, the Hima, who want their own kingdom back. And then there are Africa's great killers, the Zulu, who depopulated a million square miles with their splendid invention, the *assegai*, and would march, on command, over a cliff.

America has one great asset in helping Black Africa: talented and dedicated American Negroes. Rafer Johnson, our remarkable Olympic athlete, has already offered himself to the US State Department. America is in fact the one country that has this asset to so high a degree; Russia doesn't have it at all. I suggest, then, in passing, that our schools badly need courses in African languages, especially Swahili.

The problem of the empty areas, in the current excitements, can be put into further perspective with two more easily checked facts.

The first is that the great powers of the moment hold a more imposing overbalance of brute might than any former great power has held in all history. The Communist world or the free world, either one, can slap down any difficulty in its own neighborhood by showing only the least of its weapons. Neither can be bluffed by the other, as we have seen in Hungary and Tibet. A scheme for inciting the two great power blocs to cancel out their overwhelming powers in conflict might seem very attractive to a playboy head of a small, new-made, painfully impotent state. To suppose that this thought has not occurred to some of the new heads-of-state would be to underrate the human mind.

The second fact is purely demographic and has to do with the frequently heard statement that the "colored races" dominate world population. The word "colored" means nothing; anything that doesn't live under a rock is colored; and even race means little or nothing to the Moslems and Latin-Americans. However, world population in 1950 divided as follows: Caucasoids 58 per cent, Mongoloids 33 per cent, Negroids 9 per cent. Cross-breeds confuse the race picture but do not much affect the Negroid percentage. Another difficulty is the Chinese figure, now inflated sometimes to 700,000,000. It was 460,000,000 in 1948; 640,000,000 by United Nations estimate in 1957; and 580,000,000 by a Rand McNally estimate in 1959; all such estimates seem to me dreamy masterpieces of a propaganda ministry. If the ministry doesn't soon get it up to a billion, the staff will all be executed. Remember *Lebensraum*.

The Negroid race deserves a better share of this world than that 9 per cent, but it probably cannot handle Black Africa unaided. No solution will be offered here by me. The elements in the various situations must first express themselves. African farce and tragedy will provide material for novels for the next ten years. The city mobs will riot and the tribal centers of power will test their strengths. The most ominous of the tribes—and their silence has been remarkable—are those related to the Moslem world to the north. The real African movements are hidden; they are obscured, rather than revealed, by silly riots.

The trouble is that the slaves have not been freed; they have only been turned loose to find new masters.

COEXISTENCE ENGLISH

STEPHEN VIEDERMAN

The Soviets seem to have gotten beyond the dull foreign language textbook. Instead of providing the language student with exercises in bare linguistics, they give him—at a time when he is supposedly interested in grammar, vocabulary and style—a view of the outside world and an inspiration to love his own country, both at no extra expense of time.

An example of this textbook art is M. Galinskaya and Z. Tsvetkova's *Uchebnik Angliiskovo Yazyka*, published in Moscow by Foreign Literature Publishing House in July, 1959. Like all books printed in the Soviet Union, it had to receive the imprimatur of the State before it could be used. Employing, as do all language textbooks, a series of readings and translation exercises, this one's purpose is to teach English to Soviet students.

The gist of an essay entitled "For Peace, For Democracy: Message from American Cultural Workers," reprinted in this text, is that "the poetry and music our State Department broadcasts to Europe, to impress everybody with the riches of imperialist culture, are the work of men neglected and scorned throughout their lives by hypocrites who now pretend to honour them." A brutal selection about the lower East Side of New York in the early Thirties, undated by the compilers, asks, "Is there any gangster who is as cruel and heartless as the present legal State?"

An article reprinted from *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy* reports on the American occupation of Pyongyang, Korea.

Not all buildings of the city were destroyed by bombing. Many of them were blown up or set on fire when the American troops retreated. Among the buildings destroyed in this way were the Kim Ir Sen University; the boys' secondary schools; the Opera House; municipal institutions; most of the food factories and all government institutions. When the U. S. troops left the city, they set fire systematically to all of the city's tramcars, and also blew up several bridges and the water system.

The reported situation in Nampo was no better.

The thirteen hospitals of the city were all marked with the Red Cross, but they were, nevertheless, so destroyed by bombs that only one of them can be repaired. Of twenty-six schools, only two can be used, and only one of many churches, a small one.

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The American occupation of Nampo lasted from October 22 to December 5, 1950. During that time many buildings were burned, and all foodstuffs were destroyed. The Americans brutally killed 1,511 people, more than half of them women and children.

Another article, reprinted from the same Cominform journal, enlists the sympathies of the language student "against the attempts of the American imperialists to kindle the flames of a new world war."

The youth suffers first, directly and most seriously from the war. The imperialist aggressors are trying to divide and corrupt the youth, to poison them with chauvinism and racism, to drive millions of young men into aggressive army divisions, to make them cynical killers and then to send them to shed blood on the fields of Europe and Asia for the interests of the capitalist magnates. . . .

The task of the Communist and Workers' Parties is to help to form a broad active [sic] in the democratic youth organizations, help the youth activists to master the Marxist-Leninist teaching and carry it to the masses of the youth. Armed with the all-victorious teaching of Marxism-Leninism, they will help more millions of young people to take part in active struggle against the criminal plans of the war-mongers.

The dual aim of education in the Soviet Union is evident here: to train the individual in the skills and techniques he needs to serve society, and to provide him with evidence of the superiority of the Soviet system. In English language texts published in the USSR in the late Forties and early Fifties, most of the reading selections were devoted to idealized accounts of life in the Soviet Union. Now that contacts with the West have increased, textbooks reflect a new concern with the outside world. The reading and translation exercises in Galinskaya and Tsvetkova's text are 'adapted' from both Soviet and American sources, including *The Daily Worker* and a number of novels published by International Publishers in the Thirties. Selections from Dreiser and Mark Twain are found beside the writings of A. Saxton, Michael Gold and Mike Quin. The range of subject matter is wide.

And nothing is sacred. Even the old bawdy ballad called "Barnacle Bill the Sailor" takes on a new look.

Who is knocking at my door?

Said the rich shipowner . . .

I want good grub and want more pay,

Said Barnacle Bill the sailor.

And more time off and more to say . . .

I'll ship scabs and I'll break your ranks, . . .

I'll call troops and they'll bring their tanks . . .

Your bloody threats

May come to pass,

But union men

Are a solid mass,

And you can't defeat

The working class . . .

I'll beat the drums and declare a war,

You've been fooled that way before . . .

If you start a war you'll fight it too,

We'll spill no guts for the likes of you . . .

We'll take the mills,
The ships, the land;
We'll guide them all
With labor's hand;
Your rule will fall,
And ours will stand,
Said Barnacle Bill the sailor.

The value of this selection for the language student is questionable. The vocabulary is not basic; and the images are hardly conducive to quiet study. Less brutal and more grammatical is the picture of American education found in the reading selections. We are told that Betty, a high school English teacher, "is not married because in most American states only unmarried girls can be teachers." Her brother's life is no less difficult.

John wants to be a chemist. He tries hard to get through college. His father and sister can send him very little money, and he must pay a lot for his room, for his meals, for his books, for every course in college. In American colleges very few students get scholarships. That is why most of the college boys and girls are the sons and daughters of rich people. The sons and daughters of poor people must work.

John works long, hard hours as a dishwasher in order to eke out the means for staying in college. His pleasures are few, his burdens are many. From the text it is hard to determine whether John is a student who works or a worker who studies. In fact, in the exercise that follows the selection the Soviet language student is asked "Does John work or study?"

If the association between his own life and John's is not clear to the Soviet student as he does his homework, a selection on education in the Soviet Union reminds him that "in our country there are none of the money barriers or color bars which keep so many children away from school in capitalist and colonial countries." Education in the Soviet Union is free, but the editors of this text neglected to mention that access to education is not.

The plight of the student in the capitalist countries clearly does not end once he has received his degree.

Millions of young men and girls in these countries cannot get an education, and those who get it cannot find jobs. In Britain and France, about 80 per cent of young people who finish schools are not able to find a job; in Italy over 800 professional schools were closed.

By implication, the situation in the United States is even worse. Unemployment in the United States is one of the recurrent themes in the reading selections. One exercise is a mine of facts and figures.

In New York state 40,000 workers have no right to unemployment benefit and cannot find a job . . . [In Detroit] 200,000 workers are now walking the streets unemployed. Thousands of the unemployed have no right to the meager unemployment benefit because they have been out of work for more than 27 weeks. 5,400 Detroit young men and girls, just out of school, are hopelessly looking for employment.

Having established the magnitude of the problem, the

editors convert the figures into illustrations through a series of readings 'adapted' from American and English authors.

"Are they hiring?" asks Jim, the hero of the novel *The Conveyor*, by J. Steele. The answer is blunt: "How the hell can I know?" the policeman at the gate of the factory replies. "Get in line or get the hell out of here!"

Suddenly Jim stopped as a thought shot through him. God, they hadn't paid the rent! They couldn't pay it! Now what? . . . His mind worked like a press . . . we can't pay . . . we can't pay . . . what'll we do? . . . what? God, what in hell can we do? . . . "I'm thinking too much," Jim said to himself, "I'm thinking too much . . ."

At Keller Wheel a policeman was at the gate, shouting to the group of unemployed: "There are no jobs of any kind!"

The word "hell" has now been introduced into the student's vocabulary.

The above picture is reinforced by a series of selections "after" Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. To the hopelessness of the worker's situation is added the violence of the strike.

"Ah, scab, you!" shouted the crowd. "Steal a man's job, will you? Break the strike, rob the poor, will you, you thief? We'll get you yet, now! Wait! You'll be beaten as you deserve . . ."

"I'll show you—you scab," cried a young Irishman, jumping upon the car and aiming a blow at Hurstwood's ear . . . One or two windows were broken and a stone hit Hurstwood in the face . . . Some strikers, among them a woman, jumped upon the car and Hurstwood felt that he was being pulled down. He had hardly time to speak or shout before he fell. When he became conscious again, he saw the car, the strikers, a patrol wagon and policemen fighting the crowd. Hurstwood walked nervously to the corner, turned it and ran as fast as he could.

Thus, the introduction of the word "scab."

Despite the power of Dreiser's prose, its awkwardness and colloquialism would seem to make it inappropriate as a language textbook reading selection. Perhaps in an effort to justify the inclusion of these excerpts, one of the characters in a short dialogue (written just for this text by the editors) is heard to say that *Sister Carrie* "is not written especially on unemployment, but it (give) you good pictures of American life. And, as you (know), there (be) always unemployment in any capitalist country." The Soviet language student is to fill in the proper verb form.

Greed on the part of the capitalist is seen to be as characteristic of capitalist society as are unemployment and poverty. From the novel *Ruthless*, by W. De Mille, we have the following example: "When we came here in the spring I found the bottle opened and only half full," Judson tells his wife, as they prepare to close down their summer house for the season. "I understood that somebody had been here and had drunk some of my wine. The thief! That's why I'm putting strychnine into the bottle. The thief who stole my wine may come here again, as soon as we leave, and have another drink. Let him drink now." Though his wife protests, Judson goes

ahead with his sinister plan. But this little melodrama ends with true socialist justice being done. The caretaker is speaking. "You have only fallen down, sir, nothing serious. Drink this and you will be much better." A glass of wine was being given to him. Without opening his eyes, half-conscious, he drank."

A number of reading selections are concerned with the Negro problem: "nigger" is added to the student's word list; and such facts as "Negroes are not allowed to join the Union" are established. One selection reprinted from *The Daily Worker* tells of "lynchers' justice." Though aware of the identity of the guilty parties, the victim's wife "was afraid to tell the FBI representative . . . for fear that she would be killed." The guilty men go free, for the police and the jury are on their side. The widow is left to answer the question: "When is a court not a court?" Her answer would be: "When it is a club for plotting a crime."

By the time he reaches the last English reading selection, "The Future Is Being Built Today," the Soviet student ought to have a command of the language about comparable to the worth of the texts.

FROM A SUMMER JOURNAL

PAUL GOODMAN

(Paris) In Manet's *Olympia*, who is Olympia? The bright nude or the negress or (I think) the almost invisible black cat?

(Lugano) Naive and sophisticated art: In Luzern, in keeping with the tone of the mountains, the somewhat asperity of the climate, the foliage, the manners of the folk, they have painted the benches along the lake beautifully, newly, a dark pine-green, and every slat in perfect repair. Likewise here in Lugano, in keeping with the shining air, the flowers, the manners of the folk, they have painted the benches newly, beautifully a flaming red with a touch of orange, and some of the slats are not in good repair but just painted over. Naturally the Ticinesi employ these spots of hibiscus among palms and cypress, *tilleuls* heavy with odor, and everywhere bright flowers. Yet it's too much for me, too lush for me, and I long for the French, who would thin down this luxuriance to a "style," and paint the benches a bodiless French gray or anything that would counter mere vitality with a dimension of neutrality, withdrawal.

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(Venice) *The Shield of Venice*: that improbable blue field, the gold stars and the gold lion; yet on a summer night the sky is this very blue. Does it *therefore* work? This is popular art with the special Venetian effect: a splash of naive art on the most sophisticated art: perverse child-genius.

(Venice) This vast crowd, even of tourists, or perhaps especially of tourists, fits the Piazza San Marco, for the Piazza was made to show off to travelers. The bother is that these days this crowd has no *business* in Venice and therefore it is too big and Venice too small; for now Venice is looked at rather than looked up to or around at. So the beauty becomes picturesque and a little ridiculous. And the Venetians are living on this accumulated capital of their great ancestors the way a good-for-nothing boy inherits a million dollars. Yet "Men are we, etc. . . ." as Wordsworth said about this very scene.

(Venice) Let me then raise the general problem: *How to live with the monuments?* A. In Venice the people live in them, carefully preserving them as a fixed capital from antiquity. But the monuments are not part of their going business, except as the people are hotel-keepers; they do not really function socially (the Palace has no Council, the Cathedral is not prayerful); nor do the Venetians produce economic goods. The income is from the tourists who come to see and share in these same monuments, and it takes three forms: 1) Accommodations, etc., at tourist prices: this is like a continual tax or toll and it is legitimate, like any luxury tax. Unfortunately, such an income does nothing for the people's own need to produce and have pride in production. Many are left altogether unemployed. And the values of the present day, what people aim at, are necessarily the values of the visitors, the "rich Americans"; for it is the visitors who wield real power and must be pleased. Even more unfortunately, the visitors, like all people on vacation, are at their worst and often deserve contempt and cheating. So this income takes a second form—2) conning, the attempt to get the visitors' money for nothing. Conning raises the people to equality with or superiority to the tourists, who can be held in contempt as dupes. But on the bad side, it prevents any close personal contact between the people and their guests, for there is no trust. 3) Finally, there is outright robbery, which is better, for it takes the visitors as simply tribal strangers or invaders; but of course this makes it impossible to stay on. All this is sad. What then to do with St. Mark's there, that, day and night, rain and shine, could not be more lovely? Would it be better if, when there is no Duke, there were no Ducal Palace? God forbid.

B. In Athens or Cairo the situation is simpler. The inheritance from antiquity is not the milieu of the people's life, it is more like a natural resource, a gold mine that pays off in tourists, and that it pays to preserve and improve.

C. In Paris, on the contrary, up to the last decades there has been a most excellent handling of the monuments. Not to "preserve" them, but prudently to *conserve* them, using them in so far as they can be accommodated to the productive going concern: this is like a son inheriting a fortune and going on to new enterprises. Then the visitor comes, looks up to, looks around at, and shares in,

if he has business in Paris. But alas, one senses that recently the continuity has snapped: the Parisians will no longer transform this inheritance—the old style is no longer gradually transformed, the modern building is unbelievably shoddy. But unlike the Venetians, the Parisians do not accept living in their monuments like curators, they are hard and angry with the visitors. (The Venetian robs you and wants to be liked; the Parisian robs you and wants you to feel precisely that you are beneath him, to cover his own humiliation.) They cling to a conceit of themselves as Parisians when it is no longer their Paris, and therefore they make it nobody's Paris. Yet that lovely city, in quiet France!

(Florence) The Problem of Living with the Monuments: Florence is something else again, different from the integrated transformation of Paris. The Florentine monuments have not been so adaptable to community need: they are more tough and more grand, and the remains look backward more to ancient days. Nevertheless, the Florentines have gone on and do not live as if in a museum. There the things are, you rub shoulders with them. This is the place in the world where it would be seriously worthwhile to question the man in the street. "What is your favorite statue here? What do you have to say in connection with that? How far back does your memory of it go. Etc."—to find out what has been the effect of living with their past the way they do. And I cannot at all predict the answers.

(Florence) I am projecting my own mood, estranged and rocky and alone, but this city of Florence is a good screen to project on all right, strange and rude and tough, though humanly kindly. Nowhere in these old buildings is what is sweet to me, the common sociable spirit, but again and again the imposed conception of a man—and one man imposing his conception on another's conception—and yes, the man not pleasing himself but austere fulfilling his conception. For instance, the terrible, wilful arch connecting the nave to the Duomo. It is tolerable just because it is so powerful. They seem to be terribly fond of heroes who have decapitated something for the public good and are holding up the head for all to see. Are we then supposed to be serenely happy with our triumph and not perhaps a little uneasy in the collar-bone?

(Florence) Everywhere there are named individuals. It seems to be like this: unlike most Italians, the Florentines have managed to draw strength from the Whole and maintain the Whole, and they do it by the unifying insight and decision of single men with individually characteristic styles. Nor does one get the impression that these individuals form any band of friends. (All this is what Burckhardt was saying.) Yet if we put it this way, it's impossible. If this were so, there would not be any city at all. The feeling here is tough, but it is deeply feeling and there was (and is) a city. These are not free-booters. But in Santa Croce one guesses at the answer: Praise! Just and unstinted praise. (To be sure it's not *hard* to praise justly and unstintingly Michelangelo next to Dante next to Machiavelli, and on the opposite side of the aisle Galileo Galilei, but that's just it.) Here they did not give you support, not to speak of love, neither beforehand nor as you went along—you had to fight even for the

opportunity. This is not a world in which to be happy; the outcome of the struggle is marked by a desperate, hardened individuality. But then, forming a cement—a bitter nourishment and an incentive both—Praise, and in it nothing grudging . . . Now as I see this, and hear this praise resound, I think, "I too!" Instead of feeling, as I usually do, that my time is slipped away, I feel I have plenty of time to carry out something great and worthy of praise, as indeed I have the soul and knowledge. It is simply necessary to put away the yearning to be supported, loved, and happy. Isn't it what I always urge on my youngsters, to bear up and do something great to make me proud? "I too! I too!" These are my thoughts at the same time as, desperate for a little freedom and pleasure, in order not to be just unemployed and lonely, I risk my fool neck on a *moto* in the mountains and consort with criminals. Good! It is just this contradiction that I am going to prove is the right and only way!

(Pisa) Another Way of Living with the Monuments: I quote the mechanic at the gasoline station: "You liked Florence? Pisa is just a little town." He raised an oblique finger. "That Leaning Tower. Last year it moved three millimeters. They keep pouring in tons of concrete. . . ." "When will it fall?" I ask. "Ah, when it falls! when it falls!"—he has entertained this idea with relish—"what will happen then? The only one in the world!"

(Paris) Because it achieves so much, Paris poses most strongly the terrible difficulties of making a city beautiful. Paris has remarkably an overall unity of color, a congruity of style, a humanly possible height, and always a good sky. With its strong structure of broad streets and continual and various points of monumentality, it is indeed one vast city. Yet the continual monumentality is not pretentious because it is modestly scaled to the background, and not frigid because, though rarely very good, it is always graceful and tasteful. And Paris, has, as I have said, lived with its old monuments by progressively adapting them to present use and by building in a changing, developing style without a break. But the fatal defect is that in all that time they did not even begin to study the relation of the exterior and the interior. 1) Most superficially, there are "back streets," and it is in these that the close and domestic things of life occur, so that the beautiful structure of the city is imposed on another city. 2) More deeply, even in the formal buildings of the great plan there are no indications from their outsides what goes on inside—they are great boxes. Or rather, one can guess only too well what the interior is, for just the not-very-good but modest and urban-scaled decoration of the exterior will in the interior be chilling and heavy. The Parisians themselves behave as if a culture were imposed on them that they bear courageously, but their city is bigger than all of the Parisians, instead of being the same size as each man, woman, and child. (Indeed, their very excellence is a discouragement to them; if only all of the city were as ugly as their Pantheon, they would have salutarily rebelled!) There is no urban esthetic possible without first solving the problem of the expressive relation of interior and exterior. (Of course I do not mean that they are to have the same expression. God forbid!)

(Paris) The Sainte Chapelle is the model of Paris. Every

"appropriate" effort was made to "beautify" it. None of it is very good, but on the whole it is quite good and even interesting. Yet one gets an uncanny sense of the formative touch of St. Louis: everything he touched he froze. The one stroke of life, the clashing green of the Rose against the prevailing purple of the other windows, is a replacement. . . . No, no, perhaps the best touch is the little diagonal peephole of Louis le Malin, whereby he could watch ("attend") the Mass without being himself seen. This *sournois* spitefulness—e.g. in Pascal!—is the thrill of life of France.

(*Paris*) There is something blasphemous about portraying the Creator with a halo. Whence comes this halo?

(*The Hague*) In a painting by Vermeer, take any couple of inches—just enough to include any shape in the texture—and again you have a smaller painting by Vermeer. The only equal example of this phenomenon that I can think of, is nature.

OUR FERTILITY CULT

AN EXCHANGE

In a vigorous but pregnant paragraph (to stick to the subject) Lincoln Day, in his "The American Fertility Cult; Our Irresponsible Birthrate" [Summer 1960], says:

But if present population trends continue, we may soon be forced to take measures against the parents of large families, much as we would take measures against the perpetrators of any other kind of anti-social act. As things are, any American couple with more than three children could quite properly be charged with *social irresponsibility*; social irresponsibility for having contributed to a population explosion that has already marred the quality of American life and that will inevitably make even more difficult a solution to the population problems of the rest of the world. (Stress mine.)

I can see it now . . .

A National Family Planning Association has been established with local offices in every town and neighborhood. Perhaps it is, instead, a Department of Family Efficiency or even a Bureau of Population Resources. Vast armies of machines and tabulators have processed the census data and have determined by a suitably "scientific" formula the precise number of children each family should be allowed in order to be both "socially responsible" and, above all, "efficient." A Nine Year Plan for a socially responsible birthrate has been formulated with a measure of flexibility allowing for the normal statistical margin of error. Kits are provided, free of charge or at a nominal rate, that offer the latest scientific information on controlling that peculiarly social disease—birth. Do-it-yourself packages for easy (and painless) self-sterilization are introduced, despite the AMA's cries

of "socialized medicine."

(Mrs. Jones leans over the back fence and whispers to Mrs. Smith, "Did you hear about the Doe's? They have five children! They're a menace to the community and society. I think the Association should hear about it right away!")

Years pass, perhaps decades, under this era of benevolent social responsibility. Then one day in 1990 the headquarters of the Family Planning Association is thrown into a turmoil: "They" have just estimated that for the next period of national growth this country needs, not a good five-cent cigar (despite the active lobbying of die-hard cigar smokers), but an accelerated growth of population to meet the new demands of "technological improvements" and because of a lag in the current birthrate. It seems that the free and accessible sterilization and abortion methods, along with the increased efficiency of the various contraceptives, have accomplished their task only too well: People can have all the pleasures of the sexual life without the tiresome and irritating task of having to care for and rear children, with all its expense and the headaches and stigma of social irresponsibility. Even the problem of what used to be called the "unwed mother" has vanished with the acceptance of the new means of preventing life. Hard-working Stabilization Boards have all but triumphed in their long struggle against the "lower socio-economic groups" whose large families were once the bane of society.

But now the Association is faced with the task of increasing the population: more babies are needed. The Association rises to the challenge. Old posters decrying fertility are torn down and are replaced by new ones extolling the blessings of the large family. Statistics are marshalled to prove the longevity of couples with many children. Enormous taxes are placed on kits, accessories, etc., that prevent life, on the grounds that people who commit such a socially irresponsible act should help bear the social cost. The old system of income tax deductions for children is reinstituted. Bonuses are paid to couples with more than five children. The entire population is mobilized and geared to production! The unfortunate nine-month lag has been provided for by the Association, which looked ahead and started the campaign well in advance. New discoveries are making it possible to advance the birth date by at least two or three months, and it is found that artificially induced premature babies are just as efficient (on the average) as the old style nine-month children. It is the duty of every couple, married if possible, to get on the bandwagon of social responsibility and produce more babies.

Back at headquarters, in the midst of this campaign, the director, in one of his rare moments of leisure, is catching up on his reading. Bemused, he notes that the birth process was one looked upon as one of the greatest of natural miracles. What a curious idea that life was sacred and the family unit fundamental and inviolable. With more interest, he reads of the achievements of the Greeks and Romans in his "field." He decides that the means were bad, too messy—leaving infants to perish of exposure—besides, it didn't always work. Still, they were on the right track, and considering the level of their

technological development . . . After all, he reflects, their methods were crude, but they were experimental. . . . He wonders whether they might have something to say to the present generation. Letting children see the light of day did give women some psychological satisfaction (very important to plan for that). And, too, the Greeks and Romans did have the advantage of seeing whether the baby looked like a good prospect, or whether he was unhealthy and could be eliminated. There was no sense in increasing social costs by supporting unfit children. *I can see it now . . .*

Seriously, gentlemen: If we are faced with a situation in which there is a limited amount of resources and a great many people, let us put our energy and thinking to: 1) obtaining with all available techniques new, substitute, or more resources; 2) sharing the resources we have in the best way possible, rather than eliminating people or by one means or another interfering with the basic freedom and rights of the family.

JOHN D. AZARY
1951 B.A., Columbia College
Washington, D. C.

While I agree for the most part with Mr. Day, I must strongly object to his ignoring two important considerations and obfuscating a third. The first is invention. In justifying a larger population, Mr. Day and everyone else would take for granted that New York State receives many more patents than Rhode Island, because it has many more people. Thus, when our country is five times as populated as it is today, shall we not be making necessary adaptive inventions five times as fast (e.g. in hydroponics and synthetic food), other things being equal? To be sure, other things will not be equal, especially if the quality of our population has been lowered by breeding largely from the bottom; but American inventing, according to my own measurements, has been increasing rather steadily since 1880 at a rate of 5.8 per cent per year compounded, which makes 110-fold, or 4.14 times faster than the population. Condorcet saw long ago the unimpeachable population factor in the future of invention, but moderns forget it.

Second, Darwin taught that biologic life is a universal rivalry, of one species against others, and that the keenest rivalry is between the individual and groups *within* each species, because they seek the same scarce things. We (variously defined as our family, our class, our nation, our race) are engaged in an old and continuing rivalry with other, unlike groups, for possession and mastery of the world, or for a larger or smaller position in it. It is just as certain as mathematics that if the others continue to increase faster than we do, we and whatever we stand for shall probably be defeated and destroyed, along with whatever qualities, ideas and culture we possess.

My third objection is Mr. Day's obfuscation of eugenics and eugenics (good upbringing). Mr. Day says that intelligence tests are defective, the superiority of the (racially perishing) upper class is not proved; and its greater ability to transmit culture by schooling and home training will not be enough of a heritage for the new generation. Mr. Day does not say outright that all classes

and races are equally fit as begetters and rearers, but he seems to seek to convey that impression. Reduced to algebraic simplicity, his logic is: Opposing evidence is somewhat deficient, therefore my case stands *proved*. Yet there is a worldful of evidence, as any sociologist well knows, constituting an excellent *prima facie*, if somewhat imperfect, case for the innate superiority of the classes who had climbed higher, and of certain races in comparison with others. A *prima facie* case is entitled to stand unless and until impugned by sound fact and reasoning . . .

S. COLUM GILFILLAN
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Chicago, Illinois

It was truly disappointing to see such an article as that by Lincoln Day in the FORUM. Starting the article like a tabloid newspaper reporter who has just discovered the "population explosion," Mr. Day resorts to unqualified statements of opinion, dubious sensational statistics and abhorrent social commentary. He states: ". . . Americans appear to regard with positive enthusiasm their own burgeoning population." Why not "most," "many," "some," "a few" Americans? He and I are at least two that do not embrace the idea. Mr. Day uses "scare" statistics when he tells us that our population has been increasing at a rate higher than India's, Japan's, and many other of the world's population trouble-spots. Later, he more calmly seems to controvert this statement by saying that our birthrate is greater than that of any other *Western* country. Mr. Day then engages in the population "numbers game" when he predicts our state 98 and 356 years hence. It is beyond me why he didn't tell us that the population of the United States is now as large as the population of the world one thousand (or two thousand) years ago, or how long it would take this country to equal the present world population. In fact, it was truly disappointing that he didn't tell us how long it would take before Americans would be standing crammed together from ocean to ocean! . . .

But let us not stop here. Let us weigh his counter-arguments to the economic, scientific, and social arguments, as he sees them, in support of American population increase. He says that minerals and sources of energy in current use are non-renewable—that we are using up capital it took millions of years to create. The most that can be said for this is that it is "old hat," propounded in the grade schools twenty to thirty years ago. What is the situation today, after our population continued to steam-roll? Coal mines are closed for lack of markets; oil reserves, in this country alone, are three or four times the size estimated then; the same oversupply could be cited for iron ores and the other minerals mentioned. As for water: although I cannot speak for the other cities mentioned, New York's mayor is now offering hundreds of acres of water-shed land for state parks. Nowhere in Mr. Day's article can one find opposing mention of new, better and cheaper materials which have already driven the so-called staples out of the market.

In conclusion, Mr. Day holds that a check on fertility is the "efficient" way. Nonsense! The efficient way is

slaughter or mass sterilization and I am almost surprised it was not advocated, given the tone of the introductory paragraphs. For Mr. Day to come down to the obvious, democratic control was a let-down, for in the end he proposes no solution. He calls for control through "free decision" but makes no recommendation for presentation of material to those who must make such decisions. His utter failure is finally pointed up: he excites the reader to the point where he is ready for a fighting solution and leaves him with flabby protestations of others' irresponsibility . . . Such an article is most damaging to a rational constructive approach. Most sadly, its weakness will, in the eyes of many, be hidden by the aegis of a fine and responsible publication.

DAVID J. GOODMAN
1950 B.A., Columbia College
Kew Gardens, New York

Lincoln Day writes:

In Mr. Azary's letter we are faced again with the short-run versus the long-run argument. There is no doubt that in the short run (say, ten to twenty years) the world could support more people at a higher material level of living. But in the long run, population growth must cease. It is, of course, Mr. Azary's privilege to subscribe to what I have labelled the "bread-and-potatoes theory" of the nature of man. But I should like to emphasize that in so doing he chooses higher mortality in preference to lower fertility as the ultimate check to population growth.

Mr. Goodman (my third correspondent) is also a "bread-and-potatoes" man. But his main objections seem directed to my form of presentation. I think his reaction is a measure of its effectiveness, however. A strictly scholarly presentation (and there have been some) might not only have failed to attract readers, it would probably not even have been accepted by a publication for the non-specialist.

No doubt, as Mr. Goodman says, slaughter and mass sterilization would be "efficient" ways of controlling population from the standpoint of sheer numbers; but as I said in my article, acceptable means must meet certain ethical criteria. As might also have been gathered from my article, I hope that the wide dissemination of the facts of population will convince a sufficient number to control the size of their families.

And now to Mr. Gilfillan's three points: His first I have heard before, sometimes in this guise and sometimes (when coming from those troubled by population growth) in the form of claims that a doubling in numbers will bring a doubling (or more) in juvenile delinquency, crime, etc. I am particularly surprised that Mr. Gilfillan should argue thus, for it is partly on the basis of his own studies of simultaneous and independent invention and discovery that most sociologists give priority in these processes to the social and cultural setting, rather than to the particular individuals involved. If Mr. Gilfillan wants a faster rate of invention, let him work to change the social setting in which it occurs and the cultural foundation the inventor has to work with. Ditto for philosophy, art, and music. How many Italians does it take to produce a Michelangelo? How many Jews a Hillel? How many Englishmen

a Newton?—to choose examples from the Western tradition only.

I would agree with Mr. Gilfillan that some minimum number is necessary to maintain a group's power in the world; but I would add that technological change has always supplied great equalizers—from the crossbow to the hydrogen bomb. I would also add that too many (as in India, Indonesia, China) has the effect of weakening a nation by requiring it to expend too much of its capital and energy just to support its numbers.

For Mr. Gilfillan's Social Darwinism there is no justification. If he persists in believing there is, he must do so on faith, not scientific evidence.

MARK TWAIN: A FOOTNOTE

PAUL FATOUT

In the recent renewal of interest in the work and life of Mark Twain I have seen no reference to one of the oddest of the legal difficulties in which Twain's work was always becoming entangled, and one of the odder passages in the annals of publishing.

In 1917 Mitchell Kennerley, a New York publisher, issued *Jap Herron: a Novel Written From the Ouija Board*. The frontispiece is a portrait of Mark Twain, and in a long introduction Mrs. Emily Grant Hutchings, of Hannibal, Missouri, explains that the novel was dictated in 1915 by the other-worldly essence of the humorist. She also remarks upon difficulties in transmission. At one point Washington Irving had tuned in to express approval of the enterprise. It was high time, said he, that literary spirits engaged in pursuits more dignified than rappings and knocking furniture around. Charles Dickens had got on the air, but all he could say was that he had been trying ever since his death to finish *Edwin Drood*.

Despite interruptions, *Jap Herron* was transcribed and published. It is the story of Jasper "Jap" Herron, son of poor and shiftless parents, who at the age of twelve runs away to a village called Bloomtown. There he gets a job on the *Herald*, is befriended by the owner of the paper, and through zeal and sinlessness rises to a position of respectability as an eminent prig who inherits the *Herald*, becomes mayor of the town he has made spotless, and marries the banker's daughter. Full of a lamentable mortality, continual agonizing over coffins, and people as wooden as puppets, the book is alien to the robust manner of the living Mark Twain. Snuffing and sobbing drench the pages, so much tearful mawkishness that, to

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echo Huck Finn, the story is "that damp I never see anything like it."

Reviewers, to a man, condemned. They complained that the humorist appeared to have lost his sense of humor. Such a morbid emphasis on the pathos of death struck them as an incongruous attitude for a fatalist who had finally shuffled off this mortal coil. They called the book "sob stuff", "a tale of voluptuous domestic sentiment" that slandered "both his memory and the future life." If a lachrymose novel of unreal characters and overstrained emotion was the best he could produce from the other world, they hoped he would thereafter remain silent on his side of the boundary. They suggested that the story originated, not in the ghostly mind of Mark Twain, but in the subconsciousness of the ouija board operators.

The opinion of Mark Twain's daughter, Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch, was unequivocal. Having been badgered to exasperation by letters asking for confirmation of ouija board remarks, she dismissed the whole thing as "silly, foolish, stupid, and crazy." In February, 1918, she instructed her attorney to apply for an injunction to restrain publication of *Jap Herron*, but it had already been published. Whereupon, in June, Harper & Brothers brought suit in the Supreme Court of New York against Mitchell Kennerley and Mrs. Hutchings to prohibit further sales, to require destruction of unsold copies, and to ask for an accounting of sales to date. A long complaint held that Mark Twain had been under contract to Harpers for over twenty years, that the company had made his name internationally famous, that publication of an inferior book purportedly written by him would be damaging to his reputation and inimical to Harpers. Although the complaint did not acknowledge the ghostly authorship as a fact, it implied that the spirit of Mark Twain had no right to market a literary commodity through any house other than Harpers.

The suit raised knotty questions. Could the learned court surpass all other authorities by deciding whether spirit communication was fact or fiction? What were the rights of publishers and authors beyond the grave? Had the shade of Mark Twain a right to use the *nom de plume* copyrighted by Harpers? Could a ghost be sued for breach of contract? If so, how could he be penalized for such unbusinesslike and immoral conduct?

After more than a year of legal skirmishing, the case was put on the court calendar for October 20, 1920, but it never came to trial. Before it could be heard it was marked off the calendar by direction of Justice Henry D. Hotchkiss, no reason given. Perhaps the court could not face the ordeal of answering unanswerable questions. It may also have been depressed at the probability that defendants would perform with the ouija board and summon the spirit of Mark Twain to testify. If such testimony were not barred as incompetent, irrelevant, even immaterial, it would nevertheless be unsuitable to the gravity of the Supreme Court. Possibly the justices concluded that the case was not within their jurisdiction. Their refusing to hear it was tantamount to dismissal.

Thus *Jap Herron* exists either as a curious public display of the subconscious or, if you prefer, as a bona fide, if garbled, message from Mark Twain. In either event

the result is not cheering, for the book reads so much like the printed porous plaster he was said to have deplored that it does no credit to any author, human or ghostly. If his spirit had any part in this incident, the experience must have been discouraging, for he has not been heard from since.

MATURITY, MIND, & MONEY

AN EXCHANGE

I would like to comment on Dr. Margaret Mead's proposal in "Marrying In Haste In College" [FORUM, Spring 1960], that married couples receive scholarship money where academic choice is a mature one and academic standing merits support . . . The proposal [implies that] money might be given or withheld from a student couple depending in part on the emotional maturity and healthy balance of that couple.

This qualification is reminiscent of a more odious arrangement whereby the applicant, in order to qualify for some form of assistance, needed to be of good moral character, Protestant, abstaining from liquor, a non-smoker, etc. To create another worthy category—the "emotionally healthy"—leads us down another blind alley. Who would make this evaluation of mental stability? Diagnosis and treatment of emotional disorders and disturbed mental relationships is a professional skill. Dr. Mead makes only brief mention of this in her reference to advisers and counselors and deans.

Certainly if debate rages with respect to what makes a good teacher, we should be equally concerned about the kind of intellectual equipment, training and qualifications necessary for university counselors and advisers. That many institutions of higher learning are committed to helping students not only with their academic plans but also with their emotional problems is, I think, wise. (There are many people, though, who feel very differently.) But the trend is clear and most of us who see it as a sound one need to grapple with the perplexing issue of the professional competence of the individual doing the personal counseling. There is a great deal of controversy among psychologists, marriage counselors, psychiatric social workers and guidance counselors, who often hold professionally and personally disparate views with respect to the equipment and training necessary to do personal and family counseling. These are serious professional issues . . . These are issues around which schools will eventually need to commit themselves . . . with respect to whom they hire as counselors and advisers.

But whatever the question of professional competence, one point is clear: when schools make decisions about scholarships, the crucial factor still needs to be how well the student performs academically. That there are many

scholarship students with serious problems who do excellent scholastic work is no news to most people. That they might perform even better if their personal problems were lessened would probably be conceded by many people also. Whether the college has the responsibility to recommend personal help for such students is a complicated question, involving on one side the values of the college and the degree of responsibility it entrusts to [its own] professional person to diagnose what personal help is needed, and on the other side the right of the student to accept or refuse personal help without jeopardy to his scholarship funds. If there are students who are unable to function well academically because of individual or family problems, then outside help is needed. I don't think there is much question here. The college then needs to assume the responsibility of exploring and evaluating the resources within its own boundaries or in the outside community in order to steer the student to the right agency or individual.

Often it is professionally sound to help individuals to remove themselves from situations where we know that they cannot meet the standards set for them. When faced with an indecisive student, it is important for a counselor or psychiatric social worker to know what his college is specifically asking of him. Otherwise it is difficult for us to do our job, either with the student who has made a mistake and acknowledges that perhaps he should not be in college, or with the student whose problems are such that he cannot evaluate realistically what is expected of him or mobilize himself to meet the challenge.

This point of view is, I think, different from what Dr. Mead is expressing when she suggests that funds be allocated to couples who have made their decisions "maturely" and whose academic standing deserves support. There are many immature couples of good academic standing who would quite properly resent the withholding of funds because the university believes that . . . they would probably be unable to derive maximum benefits from the undergraduate experience.

Dr. Mead makes brief mention of women who help finance their husbands' school careers by working. This poses an even more ticklish problem about scholarships. How does a scholarship committee evaluate the soundness of a family decision when one member of the family is not even in school? Would it be legitimate or proper to interview the working wife? . . .

I too decry many of the trends that Dr. Mead is discouraged about. I too feel that the university [should] turn out graduates who are sound academically and relatively healthy psychologically . . . But emotional health ought not to become a catch phrase dazzling either the helping professions or college administrators to the point where they lose sight of the size and complexity of the mental health problem . . . inherent in a proposal to tie a scholarship fund to the noble but undefined quality called emotional maturity.

Let us try to understand and appreciate what each of us is qualified to do . . . The freedom to be psychologically immature or neurotic may be a rather expensive freedom both to the individual and to the college. But that freedom needs to be enjoyed or suffered so long as the

student or student couple satisfactorily meets the academic requirements for scholarship money.

EDWARD BERKOWITZ

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Margaret Mead writes:

Mr. Berkowitz has raised an interesting issue by misconstruing what I said; very much as *Life* recently misconstrued the aims of the mental health movement. By "mature academic choice" I meant just that—not "emotional maturity," nor "healthy balance." Furthermore, I was discussing whether it was advisable for colleges and universities actively to encourage student marriages. At no point did I raise the question of penalizing students for marrying, as was done in the past. But there is just so much money for scholarships, loans, and dormitories, and the decision as to how this money is to be used rests with the institution. By building dormitories for married students, colleges and universities make marriage easier and minimize the students' responsibilities. And, by giving scholarships that just permit a married student and his wife to live, the institution actively underwrites a form of marriage which, on the whole, is proving to be undesirable.

If, instead, married students were obliged to find suitable lodging and to plan for their own support, the institutions would not be underwriting this trend. Then, if both the man and the girl win scholarships, the scholarship committee need not be concerned. But if a scholarship awarded to one member of a married couple were to propel the other into a form of life which deprives her (it is almost always "her") of an education, a scholarship committee might give pause. I would make the criteria formal, related not to a counselor's ability to discriminate levels of maturity, but to the extent of the student's commitment and ability.

It should be remembered that most of the institutional world is now forcing young people to marry. Distrust of unmarried male employees is reaching appalling proportions and seriously interferes with the post-adolescent professional development of unusual men—and women. I simply raised the question whether colleges and universities should not assume that an unmarried state is usual and refrain from underwriting or facilitating marriages where the married couple is the unit. Of course give scholarships and fellowships to *individuals*, but require proof that the granting of one scholarship will not impair the educational potentialities of another person. It is routine for institutions granting fellowships to inquire whether a student will be free to give full time to a project, often to forbid work outside the project. The student who must support a wife—or a husband—is certainly not free to give full time to the project for which a scholarship is granted. Student loans should probably be in a different category, as willingness to accept a loan and to be responsible for paying it back is in itself a sign of economic and academic maturity. After all, the primary responsibility of an institution of higher learning is to support the original aspirations of the students themselves.

Columbia

CHRONICLE

A concise review
of recent news from
Columbia University

Columbia University students received some \$3,620,000 during the past academic year through various channels of the University's financial aid program. Fellowships and scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$2,750,000, of which sum more than \$1,000,000 came from the University's general income (this appropriation will be increased by 38.6 per cent in 1960-61) and some \$700,000 from Columbia's income from special endowments. The remainder came from government, foundation, corporate, and individual gifts. In addition, under the University's loan program, enabling students to pay for part of their education on an installment plan at low interest rates, 1,417 students borrowed \$824,000 this past year. It is estimated that the University will need well over \$1,000,000 for loan purposes during the 1960-61 academic year.

Adding to Columbia's collection of Allan Nevins' own books, papers, and documents, Mr. Nevins this spring presented the University with numerous items from his private collection of historical papers. The gift includes letters and documents written by Theodore Roosevelt, Eli

Whitney, Henry Adams and Hamilton Fish; collections of Grover Cleveland and Henry White's papers; and the manuscripts of two of Mr. Nevins' books as well as four file drawers of his biographical notes on John D. Rockefeller. Mr. Nevins, who retired from Columbia as emeritus professor of history in 1958, holds two Pulitzer Prizes and is now a senior member of the research staff at the Huntington Library in California.

Scientists working on Project Ozma—a systematic search for life in outer space—will soon aim the 85-foot radio telescope at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory toward the stars Tau Ceti and Epsilon Eridani, 70 trillion miles away, to listen for artificial sound patterns (possibly emanating from some form of life) which might be mixed in with natural radio noises. Columbia University is one of nine universities sponsoring Associated Universities, Inc., which operates the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

Under a variety of arrangements, Columbia University students will be able to work at a faster rate toward their degrees from now on.

Columbia College Dean John G. Palfrey recently announced that seniors in the College will be permitted to win up to twenty-four of the thirty points required for a Master's degree during their last year in the College. Under this ruling post-graduate study toward the Ph.D. can be cut to two and a half years.

By the same sort of arrangement, but working at the other end of college, high school seniors have been winning up to six points of college credit while still in high school through special courses and credits offered under the Advanced Placement Program. Nearly one-fifth of the past year's entering class applied for credit. This fall the program will be expanded to allow entering freshmen to apply for up to 24 points—nearly a year's college work.

The University also announced a new system whereby a student in the Law School may earn a bachelor's degree in Law and a Master's degree in Business Administration in

four years instead of five, benefiting those students who plan to go into corporate law or finance.

And, for the first time, self-taught students or those who have completed high school courses over and above the work required for college admission will be eligible this fall to apply for up to thirty points of advanced credit in the School of General Studies. Qualified students will receive credit only after taking a special examination in which they achieve a B grade or better.

From Great Snoring, England, to Widowville, Ohio, the origins of odd place names have been reported in *The Book of Place Names* written by Mario Pei, professor of romance languages at Columbia University, and Eloise Lambert. The book records such permanent misnomers as Rio de Janeiro (which is not the mouth of a river) and Nome, Alaska (the result of misreading the pencilled question "Name?" on a map). More accurately tagged are three big rivers whose names so describe them, each in a different language: Rio Grande, Guadalquivir, and Mississippi. Also listed are: Upper, Middle, and Nether Wallop in Great Britain; Caballocoche (horse and carriage), Peru; Puerto Casado (married port), Paraguay; and Tore-toro (bull-bull) Bolivia.

A deep-sea canyon extending along the coast of Argentina north of the Falkland Islands was discovered recently by scientists aboard Columbia's research schooner *Vema*. Samplings taken from the trench indicate that it is an ancient river bed which may have been part of an ice-age river system in what is now central Argentina. Lying three hundred miles off the coast, the canyon is half a mile to a mile deep, nearly a mile wide at the bottom, five to twelve miles wide at the top, and is probably several hundred miles long.

With appropriate ceremony, the cornerstone of Columbia's new School of Law Building was put in place early in September. The new eight-story building, on Amsterdam Avenue between 116th and 117th Streets, is scheduled for occupancy in April, 1961. Maurice T. Moore,

Auditing the Earth, Moon, and Sea

Columbia scientists have long had seismograph "ears" to the ground but this summer they announced new plans for placing seismographs in space and under the sea. Their standard battery of instruments at the Lamont Geological Observatory and in Bermuda also recorded rare findings while just sitting still.

The lunar seismograph [Winter 1960] being built by Columbia University and the California Institute of Technology may be on the moon sometime next year. Dr. Maurice Ewing, director of the Lamont Observatory, has announced that bench models of some parts of the device have already been dropped from airplanes into areas of the California desert that resemble the moon's topography.

In July, Columbia's newest research schooner, the *Grace*, sailed to Bermuda carrying a new rocket-shaped seismograph which will be placed on the ocean floor in that neighborhood to record submarine earthquakes, sediment movements, and sound transmission. The *Sir Horace Lamb*, the University's converted mine sweeper, will work with the *Grace*, dropping depth charges for the new seismograph to record.

The Seismic and SOFAR Station in Bermuda recently received the longest underwater sound transmission ever recorded, when, early in July, the *Vema*, Lamont's schooner on the other side of the world, dropped fifty pounds of TNT into the waters south of Australia to see how far and how fast the reverberations would travel.

Three hours and 43 minutes later, the recording instruments 12,000 miles away in Bermuda picked up a series of small booming sounds at five-minute intervals. All the sound waves followed the same general route past the Cape of Good Hope, with some deviations off the central path.

During the June earthquake in Chile, seismographs at Lamont (Palisades, New York) were able to record what are called "free vibrations" for the first time. For four or five days, the earth seems to have "quivered like a plucked guitar string"—shock waves running toward opposite ends at a multitude of frequencies, then travelling back towards each other, the eventual result being vibrations of different intensities as the waves cancelled and reinforced each other. (Each wave travelling away from the point of shock has a corresponding wave going in the opposite direction around the world, the wave crests directly opposed.) The simplest mode of the complex of vibrations generated by the Chilean earthquake is known as a "football mode," so called because the planet tends to assume at certain times a shape somewhat resembling a football as the waves pass through the earth. These vibrations pass an observatory about once every hour. The Chilean quake seems to have produced several modes, with the early waves passing at 53 minutes, then 35, then 28, etc. Such waves are several thousand miles long, reaching deep into the earth, possibly to its core.

chairman of the University's Trustees, laid the cornerstone, and President Grayson Kirk conferred honorary doctorates in law upon: Viscount Kilmuir of Creich, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain; Lord Evershed of Stapenhill, Great Britain's Master of the Rolls; Whitney North Seymour, president of the American Bar Association; and Elliot E. Cheatham, Charles Evans Hughes Professor Emeritus of Law at Columbia.

Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe will be honored next spring at the Columbia School of Architecture during a two-month series of exhibitions, seminars, lectures, broadcasts, and social affairs celebrating "The Four Great Makers" of modern architecture. Messrs. Gropius, van der Rohe, and Corbusier and Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright will spend two weeks at the School during the two-month celebration, meeting other architects, educators, and writers. In addition to the activities on campus, four retrospective show-

ings of each architect's work will be held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, which Mr. Wright designed and which was recently opened in New York.

Three universities—Harvard, California, and Columbia—are sharing a \$15.1 million grant awarded by the Ford Foundation this summer to develop and expand studies of non-Western areas. Part of the Ford grant will be used at Columbia for the study of the 300 to 400 West African dialects and will enable American linguists to travel to Africa to train native students as teachers of their own languages. During the last fifteen years, Columbia awarded more advanced degrees than any other institution to students specializing in the Soviet Union and is second among universities in the number of degrees it has awarded in East Asian studies.

Ground was broken in August for a new eight-story dormitory on the Barnard campus at Broadway and

116th St. The brick and limestone building, a less decorated version of the two adjoining older dormitories, will house 150 students in double rooms. The building will be ready for occupancy in the fall of 1961.

Students from 76 foreign countries made up more than 7 per cent of Columbia's total enrollment for the 1959-60 academic year. Countries with the largest student representation were Nationalist China, 123; Canada, 112; the United Kingdom, 107; Japan, 102; India, 77; France, 65; Germany, 62; Korea, 58; Israel, 57; and Greece, 56.

To discover whether the health and habits of expectant mothers have any bearing on the development of cerebral palsy and related neurological diseases in their children, 3,000 mothers and their children will co-operate with researchers at Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons in an elaborate schedule of tests and examinations from before the children's birth until the sixth

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York 27, New York.

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year. Fifteen medical institutions throughout the United States are participating in this study, which is financed by a \$10 million grant from the United States Public Health Service and is now well under way.

● In an attempt to make a cheap substitute for natural gas, Columbia University scientists announced this spring that they will try to convert coal char into methane (the major ingredient of natural gas) using gamma radiation from radioactive cobalt. The research is being financed by a grant from the Consolidated Natural Gas System.

● The cause of malignant hypertension—a form of high blood pressure nearly always fatal—may be the overproduction of the hormone aldosterone secreted by the adrenal glands just above the kidneys, according to a group of researchers at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dr. John H. Laragh, assistant professor of medicine, said that four patients with excessive amounts of aldosterone were being treated with new chemicals called spiro lactones, designed to prevent the biological action of the hormone. While the results are promising, Dr. Laragh said the treatments have not been followed long enough to draw firm conclusions.

● Robert G. Olmsted has been appointed vice president in charge of Business and Financial Affairs at Columbia University. Mr. Olmsted, former vice chairman of the board of the Long Island Lighting Company, assumed his new duties on September 1.

● An ambitious attempt to extend the ideas of relativity in such a way as to account for the internal structure of electrons and protons has been made by Dr. Lloyd Motz, an associate professor of astronomy at Columbia University. Roughly described, Dr. Motz's theory runs as follows: Dr.

Motz has suggested that electrons and protons be regarded not as points of small dimension but as tiny complex masses, whose powerful gravitational fields hold them together in spite of strong electrostatic fields which would otherwise make them fly apart. Newton's concept of gravity holds true for aggregates of particles, such as make up the earth and planets, but is a weaker force in comparison to that which holds particles together. Einstein saw gravity as an effect of the curvature of space and Dr. Motz has related this concept to particles, which, he says, may also then be regarded as tiny regions of space that are tightly curved. Using Dr. Motz's mathematical investigations as a link, mathematicians could present a more concise and more comprehensive view of the world and universe if the gravitational attraction between objects, such as the earth and an apple, can be related mathematically to electrical forces experienced when a charged particle moves in an electromagnetic field.

● If parents wish to resort to artificial insemination, they may soon be able to decide the sex of their unborn child, according to Dr. Landrum B. Shettles of Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. Although Dr. Shettles' findings were hotly criticized by a leading British scientist, a number of trained observers stand behind the Columbia scientist's original assertions. His theory can be briefly described as follows: Although biologists have believed for a long time that sex is determined according to whether a spermatozoa is carrying an X or Y chromosome when it enters a female egg, they have found it difficult to distinguish accurately among sperm. Dr. Shettles' study has revealed that the shapes of a spermhead may indicate whether it is carrying a boy- or girl-producing chromosome. Eventually, he speculates, it will be possible to identify, separate, and dry sperm for artificial insemination.

